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FORS CLAVIGERA

VOL. II

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS

TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS
OF GREAT BRITAIN

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, D.C.L., LL.D.

NEW EDITION

VOL. II.

CONTAINING LETTERS XXV–XLVIII

GEORGE ALLEN, SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON
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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER XXV

THE PENNY TRACT

BRANTWOOD,
January 4th, 1873.

THE THIRD FORS, having been much adverse to me, and more to many who wish me well, during the whole of last year, has turned my good and helpful printer adrift in the last month of it; and, with that grave inconvenience to him, contrived for me the minor one of being a fortnight late with my New Year's letter. Under which provocation I am somewhat consoled this morning by finding in a cookery-book, of date 1791, "written purely from practice, and dedicated to the Hon. Lady Elizabeth Warburton, whom the author lately served as housekeeper," a receipt for Yorkshire Goose Pie, with which I think it will be most proper and delightful to begin my economical instructions to you for the current year. I am, indeed, greatly tempted to give precedence to the receipt for making "Fairy Butter," and further disturbed by an extreme desire to tell

you how to construct an "Apple Floating-Island"; but will abide, nevertheless, by my Goose Pie.

"Take a large fat goose, split it down the back, and take all the bones out; bone a turkey and two ducks the same way, season them very well with pepper and salt, with six woodcocks; lay the goose down on a clean dish, with the skin-side down; and lay the turkey into the goose, with the skin down; have ready a large hare, cleaned well, cut in pieces, and stewed in the oven, with a pound of butter, a quarter of an ounce of mace, beat fine, the same of white pepper, and salt to your taste, till the meat will leave the bones, and scum the butter off the gravy, pick the meat clean off, and beat it in a marble mortar very fine, with the butter you took off; and lay it in the turkey; take twenty-four pounds of the finest flour, six pounds of butter, half-a-pound of fresh rendered suet, make the paste pretty thick, and raise the pie oval; roll out a lump of paste, and cut it in vine-leaves or what form you please; rub the pie with the yolks of eggs, and put your ornaments on the walls; then turn the hare, turkey, and goose upside down, and lay them in your pie, with the ducks at each end, and the woodcocks on the sides; make your lid pretty thick, and put it on; you may lay flowers, or the shape of the fowls in paste, on the lid, and make a hole in the middle of your lid; the walls of the pie are to be one inch and a half higher than the lid; then rub it all over with the yolks of eggs, and bind it round with three-fold paper, and lay the same over the top; it will

take four hours' baking in a brown-bread oven; when it comes out, melt two pounds of butter in the gravy that comes from the hare, and pour it hot in the pie through a tun-dish; close it well up, and let it be eight or ten days before you cut it; if you send it any distance, make up the hole in the middle with cold butter, to prevent the air from getting in."

Possessed of these instructions, I immediately went to my cook to ask how far we could faithfully carry them out. But she told me nothing could be done without a "brown-bread oven;" which I shall therefore instantly build under the rocks on my way down to the lake: and, if I live, we will have a Lancashire goose-pie next Michaelmas. You may, perhaps, think this affair irrelevant to the general purposes of Fors Clavigera; but it is not so, by any means: on the contrary, it is closely connected with its primary intentions; and, besides, may interest some readers more than weightier, or, I should rather say, lighter and more spiritual matters. For, indeed, during twenty-three months, I had been writing to you, fellow-workmen, of matters affecting your best interests in this world, and all the interests you had, anywhere else:—explaining, as I could, what the shrewdest of you, hitherto, have thought, and the best of you have done;—what the most selfish have gained, and the most generous have suffered. Of all this, no notice whatever is taken. In my twenty-fourth letter, incidentally, I mentioned the fact of my being in a bad humour, (which I nearly

always am, and which it matters little to anybody whether I am or not, so long as I don't act upon it,) and forthwith I got quite a little mail-cartful of consolation, reproof, and advice. Much of it kind, —nearly all of it helpful, and some of it wise; but very little bearing on matters in hand: an eager Irish correspondent offers immediately to reply to anything, 'though he has not been fortunate enough to meet with the book;' one working man's letter, for self and mates, is answered in the terminal notes:—could not be answered before for want of address;—another, from a south-country clergyman, could not be answered any way, for he would not read any more, he said, of such silly stuff as Fors; —but would have been glad to hear of any scheme for giving people a sound practical education. I fain would learn myself, either from this practical Divine, or any of *his* mates, what the ecclesiastical idea of a sound practical education is;—that is to say, what—in week-day schools (—the teaching in Sunday ones being necessarily to do no manner of work)—our clergy think that boys and girls should be taught to practise, in order that, when grown up, they may with dexterity perform the same. For indeed, the constant object of these letters of mine, from their beginning, has been to urge you to do vigorously and dextrously what was useful; and nothing but that. And I have told you of Kings and Heroes, and now am about to tell you what I can of a Saint, because I believe such persons to have done, sometimes, more useful

things than you or I: begging your pardon always for not addressing you as heroes, which I believe you all think yourselves, or as kings, which I presume you all propose to be, or at least, if you cannot, to let nobody else be. Come what may of such proposal, I wish you would consider with me to-day what form of "sound practical education," if any, would enable you all to be Saints; and whether, such form proving discoverable, you would really like to be put through it, or whether, on the contrary, both the clergy and you mean, verily, and in your hearts, nothing by "practical education" but how to lay one penny upon another. Not but that it does my heart good to hear modern divines exhorting to *any* kind of practice—for, as far as I can make out, there is nothing they so much dread for their congregations as their getting into their heads that God expects them to do anything, beyond killing rabbits if they are rich, and being content with bad wages, if they are poor. But if any virtue more than these, (and the last *is* no small one) be indeed necessary to Saint-ship—may we not prudently ask what such virtue is, and, at this Holiday time, make our knowledge of the Ho's* more precise? Nay, in your pleading for perennial Holiday, —in your ten hours or eight hours bills, might you not urge your point with stouter conscience if you were all Saints, and the hours of rest you demanded became a realization of Baxter's Saints' Rest?

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* Letter XXIV. Vol. I. p. 485.

Suppose we *do* rest, for a few minutes, from that process of laying one penny upon another, (those of us, at least, who have learned the trick of it), and look with some attention at the last penny we laid on the pile—or, if we can do no better, at the first of the pile we mean to lay.

Show me a penny; or, better, show me the three pages of our British Bible, penny, shilling, and pound; and let us try what we can read on them together. You see how rich they are in picture and legend: surely so practical a nation, in its most valued scriptures, cannot have written or pictured anything but with discretion, and to the benefit of all beholders.

We begin with the penny;—not that, except under protest, I call such a thing as that a Penny! Our farthings, when we were boys, were as big as that; and two-pence filled our waistcoat pockets. Who, then, is this lady, whom it represents, sitting, apparently, on the edge of a dish-cover? Britannia? Yes,—of course. But who is Britannia? and what has she got on her head, in her hand, and on her seat?

"Don't I know who Britannia is?" Not I; and much doubt if you do! Is she Great Britain,—or Little Britain? Is she England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and the Indies,—or a small, dishonest, tailoring and engineering firm, with no connection over the way, and publicly fined at the police court for sneakingly supplying customers it had engaged not to? Is she a Queen, or an Actress, or a

Slave? Is she a Nation, mother of nations; or a slimy polype, multiplying by involuntary vivisection, and dropping half putrid pieces of itself wherever it crawls or contracts? In the world-feasts of the Nativity, can she sit, Madonna-like, saying: "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me"? Or are her lips capable of such utterance—of *any* utterance—no more; the musical Rose of them cleft back into the long dumb trench of the lizard's; her motherhood summed in saying that she makes all the world's ditches dirtier with her spawn?

And what has she on her head, in her hand, or on that—Shield, I believe it is meant for, which she sits on the edge of? A most truly symbolic position! For, you know, all those armour-plates and guns you pay for so pleasantly are indeed made, when you look into the matter, not at all to defend you against anybody—(no one ever pretends to say distinctly that the newest of them could protect you for twelve hours); but they are made that the iron masters may get commission on the iron, and the manufacturers commission on the manufacture. And so the Ironmongering and Manufacturing Britannia does very literally sit upon her Shield: the cognizance whereof, or—now too literally—the "Bearing,"—so obscured, becomes of small importance. Probably, in a little while, a convenient cushion—or, what not—may be substituted for St. George's Cross; to the public satisfaction.

I must not question farther what any of these symbols may come to mean; I will tell you briefly,

what they meant once, and are yet, by courtesy, supposed to mean.

They were all invented by the Greeks; and all, except the Cross, some twelve hundred years before the first Christmas: they became intelligible and beautiful first about Theseus' time.

The Helmet crest properly signifies the adoption by man of the passions of pride and anger which enable nearly all the lower creatures to erect some spinous or plumose ridge upon their heads or backs. It is curiously associated with the story of the Spartan Phalanthus, the first colonist of Tarentum, which might have been the port of an Italia ruling the waves, instead of Britannia, had not the crest fallen from the helmet of the Swabian prince, Manfred, in his death-battle with Charles of Anjou. He had fastened it that morning, he said, with his own hand,--you may think, if his armourer had fastened it, it would have stayed on, but kings could do things with their own hands in those days;—howbeit, it fell, and Manfred, that night, put off his armour for evermore, and the evil French King reigned in his stead: and South Italy has lain desert since that day, and so must lie, till the crest of some King rise over it again, who will be content with as much horse-hair as is needful for a crest, and not wear it, as our English squires have done lately (or perhaps even the hair of an animal inferior to the horse), on their heads, instead of their helmets.

Of the trident in Britannia's hand, and why it must *be* a trident, that is to say, have three prongs,

and no more; and in what use or significance it differs from other forks, (as for pitching, or toasting)—we will enquire at another time. Take up next the shilling, or, more to our purpose, the double shilling,—get a new florin, and examine the sculpture and legend on that.

The Legend, you perceive, is on the one side English,—on the other Latin. The latter, I presume, you are not intended to read, for not only is it in a dead language, but two words are contracted, and four more indicated only by their first letters. This arrangement leaves room for the ten decorative letters, an M, and a D, and three C's, and an L, and the sign of double stout, and two I's; of which ten letters the total function is to inform you that the coin was struck this year, (as if it mattered either to you or to me, when it was struck!) But the poor fifth part of ten letters, preceding—the F and D, namely—have for function to inform you that Queen Victoria is the Defender of our Faith. Which is an all-important fact to you and me, if it be a fact at all; —nay, an all-important brace of facts; each letter vocal, for its part, with one. F, that we have a Faith to defend; D, that our monarch can defend it, if we chance to have too little to say for it ourselves. For both which facts, Heaven be praised, if they be indeed so,—nor dispraised by our shame, if they have ceased to be so: only, if they be so, two letters are not enough to assert them clearly; and if not so, are more than enough to lie with. On the reverse of the coin, however, the legend is full, and clear.

"One Florin." "One Tenth of a Pound." Yes; that is all very practical and instructive. But do we know either what a pound is, or what a florin or "Fiorino" was, or why this particular coin should be called a Florin, or whether we have any right to call *any* coin of England, now, by that name? And, by the way, how is it that I get continually reproved for writing above the level of the learning of my general readers, when here I find the most current of all our books written in three languages, of which one is dead, another foreign, and the third written in defunct letters, so that anybody with two shillings in his pocket is supposed able to accept information conveyed in contracted Latin, Roman numerals, old English, and spoiled Italian?

How practical, and how sentimental, at once! For indeed we have no right, except sentimentally, to call that coin a florin,—that is to say, a "flower (lily-flower) piece," or Florence-piece. What have *we* any more to do with Lilies? Do you ever consider how they grow—or care how they die? Do the very water-lilies, think you, keep white now, for an hour after they open, in any stream in England? And for the heraldry of the coin, neither on that, nor any other, have we courage or grace to bear the Fleur-de-Lys any more, it having been once our first bearing of all. For in the first quarter of our English shield we used to bear three golden lilies on a blue ground, being the regal arms of France; (our great Kings being Frenchmen, and claiming France as their own, before England). Also these Fleur-de-Lys

were from the beginning the ensigns of a King; but those three Lions which you see are yet retained for the arms of England on two of the shields in your false florin, (false in all things, for Heaven knows, we have as little right to lions now as to lilies,) "are deduced onely from Dukedomes*: I say deduced, because the Kings of England after the Conquest did beare two leopards (the ensignes of the Dukedome of Normandy) till the time of King Henry the Second, who, according to the received opinion, by marriage of Eleanor, daughter and heire of the duke of Aquitaine and Guyon" (Guienne) "annexed the Lyon, her paternall coate, being of the same Field, Metall, and Forme with the Leopards, and so from thence forward they were jointly marshalled in one Shield and Blazoned three Lyons." Also "at the first quartering of these coats by Edward the Third, question being moved of his title to France, the King had good cause to put that coat in the first ranke, to show his most undoubted Title to that Kingdom, and therefore would have it the most perspicuous place of his Escocheon."

But you see it is now on our shield no more,—we having been beaten into cowardly and final resignation of it, at the peace of Amiens, in George III.'s time, and precisely in the first year of this supreme nineteenth century. He, as monarch of England, being unable to defend our Lilies, and the verbal instruction of the pacific angel Gabriel of

* Guillim, Ed. 1638.

Amiens, as he dropped his lilies, being to the English accordingly, that thenceforward they were to "hate a Frenchman as they did the Devil," which, as you know, was Nelson's notion of the spirit in which England expected every man to do his duty.

Next to the three Lions, however (all of them, you find, French), there is a shield bearing one Lion, "Rampant"—that is to say, climbing like a vine on a wall. Remember that the proper sense of the word "rampant" is "creeping" as you say it of ground ivy, and such plants: and that a lion rampant—whether British, or as this one, Scotch, is not at all, for his part, in what you are so fond of getting into—"an independent position," nor even in a specifically leonine one, but rather generally feline, as of a cat, or other climbing animal on a tree; whereas the three French Lions, or Lioncels, are "passant-gardant," "passing on the look out," as beasts of chase.

Round the rampant Scottish animal (I can't find why the Scotch took him for their type) you observe farther, a double line, with—though almost too small to be seen—fleur-de-lys at the knots and corners of it. This is the tressure, or binding belt, of the great Charles, who has really been to both English and Scottish lions what that absent Charles of the polar skies must, I suppose, have been to their Bear, and who entirely therefore deserves to be stellified by British astronomers.

That Tressure, heraldically, records the alliance of Charlemagne with the Scottish King Achaius,

and the vision by the Scottish army of St. Andrew's cross — and the adoption of the same, with the Thistle and Rue, for their national device; of all which the excellent Scotch clergyman and historian, Robert Henry, giving no particular account, prefers to note, as an example of such miraculous appearances in Scotland, the introduction, by King Kenneth, the son of Alpine, of a shining figure "clothed in the skins of dried fish, which shone in the dark," to his nobility and councillors, to give them heavenly admonitions "after they had composed themselves to rest." Of course a Presbyterian divine must have more pleasure in recording a miracle so connected with the existing national interests of the herring and salmon fisheries, than the tradition of St. Andrew's cross; and that tradition itself is so confused among Rodericks, Alpines, and Ferguses, that the Lady of the Lake is about as trustworthy historical reading. But St. Andrew's cross and the Thistle—(I don't know when the Rue, much the more honourable bearing of the two, was dropped)—are there, you see, to this day; and you must learn their story—but I've no time to go into that, now.

For England, the tressure really implies, though not in heraldry, more than for Scotland. For the Saxon seven kingdoms had fallen into quite murderous anarchy in Charlemagne's time, and especially the most religious of them, Northumberland; which then included all the country between the Firth of Forth and the Cheviots commanded by the fortress

of Edwin's Burg, (fortress now always standing in a rampant manner on its hind-legs, as the Modern Athens). But the pious Edwin's spirit had long left his burg, and the state of the whole district from which the Saxon angels—(non Angli)—had gone forth to win the pity of Rome, was so distracted and hopeless that Charlemagne called them "worse than heathens," and had like to have set his hand to exterminate them altogether; but the Third Fors ruled it otherwise, for luckily, a West Saxon Prince, Egbert, being driven to Charles's court, in exile, Charles determined to make a man of him, and trained him to such true knighthood, that, recovering the throne of the West Saxons, the French-bred youth conquered the Heptarchy, and became the first King of "England" (*all* England);—and the Grandfather of Alfred.

Such belt of lilies did the French chivalry bind us with; the "tressure" of Charlemagne.

Of the fourth shield, bearing the Irish Harp, and the harmonious psalmody of which that instrument is significant, I have no time to speak to-day; nor of the vegetable heraldry between the shields;—but before you lay the florin down I must advise you that the very practical motto or war-cry which it now bears—"one tenth of a pound," was not anciently the motto round the arms of England, that is to say, of English *kings*, (for republican England has no shield); but a quite different one—to wit—"Accursed, (or evil-spoken of, maledictus, opposed to well-spoken of, or benedictus), be He

who thinks Evil" ; and that this motto ought to be written on another Tressure or band than Charlemagne's, surrounding the entire shield—namely, on a lady's garter; specifically the garter of the most beautiful and virtuous English Lady, Alice of Salisbury, (of whom soon); and that without this tressure and motto, the mere shield of Lions is but a poor defence.

For this is a very great and lordly motto; marking the utmost point and acme of honour, which is not merely in doing no evil, but in thinking none; and teaching that the first—as indeed the last—nobility of Education is in the rule over our Thoughts, on which matter, I must digress for a minute or two.

Among the letters just received by me, as I told you, is one from a working man of considerable experience, which laments that, in his part of the country, "literary institutes are a failure."

Indeed, your literary institutes must everywhere fail, as long as you think that merely to buy a book, and to know your letters, will enable you to read the book. Not one word of any book is readable by you except so far as your mind is one with its author's, and not merely his words like your words, but his thoughts like your thoughts.

For instance, the other day, at a bookstall, I bought a shilling Shakespeare. To such degree of wealth, ingenuity, and literary spirit, has the nineteenth century reached, that it has a shilling to spare for its Shakespeare—can produce its

Shakespeare in a pocketable shape for that sum —and is ready to invest its earnings in literature to that extent. Good. You have now your Shakespeare, complete, in your pocket; you will read the greatest of dramatic authors at your leisure, and form your literary taste on that model.

Suppose we read a line or two together then, you and I;—it may be, that *I* cannot, unless you help me.

> "And there, at Venice, gave
> His body to that pleasant country's earth,
> And his pure soul unto his Captain, Christ,
> Under whose colours he had fought so long."

What do you suppose Shakespeare means by calling Venice a "pleasant" country? What sort of country was, or would have been, pleasant to *him?* The same that is pleasant to you, or another kind of country? Was there any coal in that earth of Venice, for instance? Any gas to be made out of it? Any iron?

Again. What does Shakespeare mean by a "pure" soul, or by Purity in general? How does a soul become pure, or clean, and how dirty? Are you sure that your own soul is pure? if not, is its opinion on the subject of purity likely to be the same as Shakespeare's? And might you not just as well read a mure soul, or demure, or a scure soul, or obscure, as a pure soul, if you don't know what Shakespeare means by the word?

Again. What does Shakespeare mean by a captain, or head-person? What were his notions of

head-ship, shoulder-ship, or foot-ship, either in human or divine persons? Have you yourselves ever seen a captain, think you—of the true quality; (see above, xxii. 446); and did you know him when you saw him?

Or again. What does Shakespeare mean by colours? The "gaily decorative bunting" of Howe and Cushing's American Circus? Or the banners with invigorating inscriptions concerning Temperance and Free-trade, under which you walk in procession, sometimes, after a band? Or colours more dim and tattered than these?

What he does mean, in all these respects, we shall best understand by reading a little bit of the history of one of those English Squires, named above, for our study; (xxii. 444), Edward III. of England namely; since it was he who first quartered our arms for us; whom I cannot more honourably first exhibit to you than actually fighting under captainship and colours of his own choice, in the fashion Shakespeare meant.

Under captainship, mark you, though himself a King, and a proud one. Which came to pass thus: "When the King of England heard these news" (that Geoffrey of Chargny was drawing near his dear town of Calais, and that Amery of Pavia, the false Lombard, was keeping him in play,) "then the King set out from England with 300 men-at-arms, and 600 archers, and took ship at Dover, and by vespers arrived at Calais, and put his people in ambush in the castle, and was with them himself.

And said to the Lord de Manny: 'Master Walter, I will that you should be the *head* in this need, for I and my son will fight under your banner.'* Now My Lord Geoffrey of Chargny had left Arras on the last day of December, in the evening, with all his gens-d'-armes, and came near Calais about one in the morning,—and he said to his knights,† 'Let the Lombard open the gates quickly—he makes us die of cold.' 'In God's name,' said Pepin de Werre, 'the Lombards are cunning folks;—he will look at your florins first, to see that none are false.' (You see

how important this coin is; here is one engraved for you therefore—pure Florentine gold—that you may look at it honestly, and not like a Lombard.) And at these words came the King of England, and his son at his side, under the banner of Master Walter de Manny; and there were other banners with them, to wit, the Count of Stafford's, the Count of Suffolk's, My Lord John de Montagu's, My Lord Beauchamp's, and

* The reason of this honour to Sir Walter was that he had been the first English knight who rode into France after the king had quartered the Fleur-de-Lys.

† I omit much, without putting stars, in these bits of translation.

the Lord de la Werre's, and no more, that day. When the French saw them come out, and heard the cry, 'Manny, to the rescue,' they knew they were betrayed.* Then said Master Geoffrey to his people, 'Lords, if we fly, we are lost; it is best to fight with good will;—hope is, we may gain the day.' 'By St. George,' said the English, 'you say true, and evil be to him who flies.' Whereupon they drew back a little, being too crowded, and dismounted, and let their horses go. And the King of England, under the banner of Master Walter de Manny, came with his people, all on foot, to seek his enemies; who were set close, their lances cut short by five feet, in front of them" (set with the stumps against the ground and points forward, eight or ten feet long, still, though cut short by five). "At the first coming there was hard encounter, and the King stopped under" (opposite) "My Lord Eustace of Ribaumont, who was a strong and brave chevalier. And he fought the King so long that it was a wonder; yes, and much pleasure to see. Then they all joined battle," (the English falling on, I think, because the King found he had enough on his hands, though without question one of the best knights in Europe;) "and there was a great coil, and a hard,—and there fought well, of the French, My Lord Geoffrey of Chargny and My Lord John of Landas, and My Lord Gawain of Bailleul, and the Sire of

* Not unfairly; only having to fight for their Calais instead of getting in for a bribe.

Cresques; and the others; but My Lord Eustace of Ribaumont passed all,—who that day struck the King to his knees twice; but in the end gave his sword to the King, saying, Sire Chevalier, I render me your prisoner, for the day must remain to the English. For by that time they were all taken or killed who were with My Lord Geoffrey of Chargny; and the last who was taken, and who had done most, was Master Eustace of Ribaumont.

"So when the need* was past, the King of England drew back into Calais, into the castle; and made be brought all the prisoner-knights thither. And then the French knew that the King of England had been in it, in person, under the banner of Master Walter de Manny. So also the King sent to say to them, as it was the New-year's night, he would give them all supper in his castle of Calais. So when the supper time came," (early afternoon, 1st January, 1349) "the King and his knights dressed themselves, and all put on new robes; and the French also made themselves greatly splendid, for so the King wished, though they were prisoners. The King took seat, and set those knights beside him in much honour. And the gentle† Prince of

* Besogne. "The thing that has to be done"—word used still in household service, but impossible to translate; we have no such concentrated one in English.

† The passage is entirely spoiled in Johnes' translation by the use of the word 'gallant' instead of 'gentle' for the French 'gentil.' The boy was not yet nineteen, (born at Woodstock, June 15, 1330,) and his father thirty-six: fancy how pretty to see the one waiting on the other, with the French knights at his side.

Wales and the knights of England served them, at the first course; and at the second course, went away to another table. So they were served in peace, and in great leisure. When they had supped, they took away the tables; but the King remained in the hall between those French and English knights; and he was bareheaded; only wearing a chaplet of pearls.* And he began to go from one to another; and when he addressed himself to Master Geoffrey of Chargny, he altered countenance somewhat, and looking askance at him, said, 'Master Geoffrey,—I owe you, by right, little love, when you would have stolen by night what had cost me so dear. So glad and joyous I am, that I took you at the trial.' At these words he passed on, and let Master Geoffrey alone, who answered no word; and so came the King to Master Eustace of Ribaumont, to whom he said joyously, 'Master Eustace, you are the chevalier whom in all the world I have seen most valiantly attack his enemy and defend his body: neither did I ever find in battle any one who gave me so much work, body to body, as you did to-day. So I give you the prize of the day, and that over all the knights of my own court, by just sentence.' Thereupon the King took off the chaplet, that he wore, (which was good and rich,) and put it on the head of My Lord Eustace; and said, 'My Lord Eustace, I give you this chaplet, for

* Sacred fillet, or "diadema," the noblest, as the most ancient, crown.

that you have been the best fighter to-day of all those without or within, and I pray you that you wear it all this year for the love of me. I know well that you are gay, and loving, and glad to be among dames and damsels. So therefore say to them whither-soever you go, that I gave it you; and so I quit you of your prison, and you may set forth to-morrow if it please you.'"

Now, if you have not enjoyed this bit of historical study, I tell you frankly, it is neither Edward the Third's fault, nor Froissart's, nor mine, but your own, for not having cheerfulness, loyalty, or generosity enough in you to understand what is going on. But even supposing you have these, and *do* enjoy the story as now read, it does not at all follow that you would enjoy it at your Literary Institute. There you would find, most probably, a modern abstract of the matter given in polished language. You would be fortunate if you chanced on so good a history as Robert Henry's above referred to, which I always use myself, as intelligent, and trustworthy for general reference. But hear his polished account of this supper at Calais.

"As Edward was a great admirer of personal valour, he ordered all the French knights and gentlemen to be feasted by the Prince of Wales, in the great hall of the castle. The King entered the hall in the time of the banquet, and discovered to his prisoners that he had been present in the late conflict, and was the person who had fought hand to hand with the Sieur Ribaumont. Then, addressing himself to that gentleman, he gave

him his liberty, presented him with a chaplet adorned with pearls, which he desired him to wear for his sake, and declared him to be the most expert and valorous knight with whom he had ever engaged."

Now, supposing you can read no other history than such as this, you had—with profoundest earnestness I say it—infinitely better read none. It is not the least necessary for you to know anything about Edward III.; but quite necessary for you to know something vital and real about somebody; and not to have polished language given you instead of life. "But you *do* enjoy it, in Froissart?" And you think it would have been, to you also, a "pleasure to see" that fight between Edward and the Sieur de Ribaumont? So be it: now let us compare with theirs, a piece of modern British fighting, done under no banner, and in no loyalty nor obedience, but in the independent spirit of freedom, and yet which, I think, it would have been no pleasure to any of us to see. As we compared before, loyal with free justice, so let us now compare loyal with free fighting. The most active of the contending parties are of your own class, too, I am sorry to say, and that the *Telegraph* (16th Dec.) calls them many hard names; but I can't remedy this without too many inverted commas.

Four savages—four brute beasts in human form we should rather say—named Slane, Rice, Hays, and Beesley, ranging in age between thirty-two and nineteen years, have been sentenced to death for the murder on the 6th

of November last, at a place called Spennymoor, of one Joseph Waine. The convicts are Irishmen, and had been working as puddlers in the iron foundries. The principal offender was the ruffian Slane, who seems to have had some spite against the deceased, a very sober, quiet man, about forty years of age, who, with his wife and son, kept a little chandler's shop at Spennymoor. Into this shop Slane came one night, grossly insulted Waine, ultimately dragged him from the shop into a dark passage, tripped him up, holding his head between his legs, and then whistled for his three confederates. When Rice, Hays, and Beesley appeared on the scene, they were instructed by the prime savage to hold Waine down—the wretch declaring, "If I get a running kick at him, it shall be his last." The horrible miscreant did get a "running kick"—nay, more than a dozen—at his utterly powerless victim; and when Slane's strength was getting exhausted the other three wretches set upon Waine, kicking him in the body with their hob-nailed boots, while the poor agonised wife strove vainly to save her husband. A lodger in the house, named Wilson, at last interfered, and the savages ran away. The object of their brutality lived just twenty-five minutes after the outrage, and the post-mortem examination showed that all the organs were perfectly healthy, and that death could only have arisen from the violence inflicted on Waine by these fiends, who were plainly identified by the widow and her son. It may be noticed, however, as a painfully significant circumstance, that the lodger Wilson, who was likewise a labouring man, and a most important witness for the prosecution, refused to give evidence, and, before the trial came on, absconded altogether.

Among the epithets bestowed by the *Telegraph*, —very properly—but unnecessarily, on these free British Operatives, there is one which needs some qualification;—that of "Miscreant," or "Misbeliever," which is only used accurately of Turks or other infidels, whereas it is probable these Irishmen were zealously religious persons, Evangelical or Catholic. But the perversion of the better faith by passion is indeed a worse form of "misbelieving" than the obedient keeping of a poorer creed; and thus the word, if understood not of any special heresy, but of powerlessness to believe, with strength of imagination, in *anything*, goes to the root of the matter; which I must wait till after Christmas to dig for, having much else on my hands.

26th December, 1872, 8, *Morning.*

The first quiet and pure light that has risen this many a day, was increasing through the tall stems of the trees of our garden, which is walled by the walls of old Oxford; and a bird,—(I am going to lecture on ornithology next term, but don't know *what* bird, and couldn't go to ask the gardener,) singing steady, sweet, momentary notes, in a way that would have been very pleasant to me, once. And as I was breathing out of the window, thrown up as high as I could, (for my servant had made me an enormous fire, as servants always do on hot mornings,) and looking at the bright sickle of a moon, fading as she rose, the verse came into my mind,—I don't in the least know why,—"Lifting

up holy hands, without wrath, and doubting";—which chanced to express in the most precise terms, what I want you to feel, about Edward III.'s fighting, (though St. Paul is speaking of prayer, not of fighting, but it's all the same;) as opposed to this modern British fighting, which is the lifting up of unholy hands,—feet, at least,—*in* wrath, and doubting. Also, just the minute before, I had upset my lucifer-match box, a nasty brown tin thing, containing, as the spiteful Third Fors would have it—just two hundred and sixty-six wax matches, half of which being in a heap on the floor, and the rest all at cross purposes, had to be picked up, put straight and repacked, and at my best time for other work. During this operation, necessarily deliberate, I was thinking of my correspondent's query, (see notes at the end of this letter,) respecting what I meant by doing anything "in a hurry." I mean essentially doing it in hurry of *mind*,—"doubting" whether we are doing it fast enough,—not knowing exactly how fast we can do it, or how slowly it *must* be done, to be done well. You cannot pack a lucifer box, nor make a dish of stir-about, nor knead a brown loaf, but with patience; nor meet even the most pressing need, but with coolness. Once, when my father was coming home from Spain, in a merchant ship, and in mid-bay of Biscay, the captain and passengers being at dinner, the sea did something or other to the ship which showed that the steersman was not minding what he was

about. The captain jumped straight over the table, went on deck, and took the helm. Now I do not mean that he ought to have gone round the table, but that, if a good captain, as he took the wheel, he would not miss his grasp of the spokes by snatching at them an instant too soon.

And you will find that St. Paul's "without doubting"—for which, if you like, you may substitute, "by, or in, faith," covers nearly every definition of right action—and also that it is not possible to have this kind of faith unless one can add—as he does —"having faith, and a good conscience." It does not at all follow that one must be doing a right thing; that will depend on one's sense and information; but one must be doing deliberately a thing we entirely *suppose* to be right, or we shall not do it becomingly.

Thus, observe, I enter into no question at present as to the absolute rightness of King Edward's fighting, which caused, that day, at Calais, the deaths of more than four hundred innocent men; nor as to the absolute wrongness of the four Irishmen's fighting, which causes only the death of one, (—who also may, for aught I know, have done something really seeming evil to the dull creatures)—but there is no doubt that the King fought wholly without wrath, and without doubting his rightness; and they with vile wrath, and miserable consciousness of doing wrong; and that you have in the two scenes, as perfect types as I can put before you of entirely good ancient

French breeding, and entirely bad modern British breeding.

Breeding;—observe the word; I mean it literally; involving first the race—and then the habits *enforced* in youth: entirely excluding intellectual conclusions. The "breeding" of a man is what he gets from the Centaur Chiron; the "beastly" part of him in a good sense;—that which makes him courageous by instinct, true by instinct, loving by instinct, as a Dog is; and therefore felicitously above, or below, (whichever you like to call it,)—all questions of philosophy and divinity.

And of both the Centaur Chiron, and St. George, one, the typical Greek tutor of gentlemen, and the other, the type of Christian gentlemen, I meant to tell you in this letter; and the Third Fors won't let me, yet, and I scarcely know when; for before we leave King Edward, lest you should suppose I mean to set him up for a saint instead of St. George, you must hear the truth of his first interview with Alice of Salisbury,—(he had seen her married, but not noticed her then, particularly,)—wherein you will see *him* becoming doubtful, and of little faith, or distorted faith, "miscreant"; but the lady Alice no wise doubtful; wherefore she becomes worthy to give the shield of England its "tressure" and St. George's company their watchword, as aforesaid.

But her story must not be told in the same letter with that of our modern British courage; and now that I think of it St. George's had better be first told in February, when I hope, some crocuses will

be up, and an amaryllis or two, St. George having much interest in both.

In an interesting letter "for self and mates" a Manchester working man asks me the meaning of "Fors Clavigera" (surely enough explained in II. 4?), and whether I mean by vulgarity "commonness," and why I say that doing anything in a hurry is vulgar. I do not mean by vulgarity, commonness. A daisy is common, and a baby, not uncommon. Neither is vulgar. Has my correspondent really no perception of the difference between good breeding and vulgarity?—if he will tell me this, I will try to answer him more distinctly: meantime, if in the Salford Library there is a copy of my *Modern Painters*, let him look at Vol. V., Part IX., Chap. VII.

He says also that he and his mates *must* do many things in a hurry.

I know it. But do they suppose such compulsion is a law of Heaven? or that, if not, it is likely to last?

Another communication, very naïve and honest, came from a Republican of literary tastes, who wished to assist me in the development of my plans in *Fors;* and, in the course of resulting correspondence, expressed his willingness to answer any questions I might wish to put to him. I answered that I imagined myself, as far as I thought needful for me, acquainted with his opinions; but that perhaps he might wish to know something more definite about mine, and that if he liked to put any questions to *me*, I would do my best to reply intelligibly. Whereupon, apparently much pleased, he sent me the following eleven interrogations, to each of which I have accordingly given solution, to the best of my ability.

1. "Can the world—its oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, continents, islands, or portions thereof, be rightfully treated by human legislators as the 'private property' of individuals?"

Ans. Certainly. Else would man be more wretched than the beasts, who at least have dens of their own.

2. "Should cost be the limit of price?"

Ans. It never was, and never can be. So we need not ask whether it should be.

3. "Can one man rightfully tax another man?"

Ans. By all means. Indeed, I have seldom heard of anybody who would tax himself.

4. "Can a million men rightfully tax other men?"

Ans. Certainly, when the other men are not strong enough to tax the million.

5. "Should not each adult inhabitant of a country (who performs service equivalent in value to his or her use of the service of other inhabitants) have electoral rights granted equal to those granted to any other inhabitant?"

Ans. Heaven forbid! It is not everybody one would set to choose a horse, or a pig. How much less a member of Parliament?

6. "Is it not an injustice for a State to require, or try to enforce, allegiance to the State from self-supporting adults, who have never been permitted to share in the framing or endorsing of the laws they are expected to obey?"

Ans. Certainly not. Laws are usually most beneficial in operation on the people who would have most strongly objected to their enactment.

7. "The Parliament of this country is now almost exclusively composed of representatives of the classes whose time is mostly occupied in consuming and

destroying. Is this statement true? If true—is it right that it should be so?"

Ans. The statement is untrue. A railway navvy consumes usually, about six times as much as an average member of Parliament; and I know nothing which members of Parliament kill, except time, which other people would not kill, if they were allowed to. It is the Parliamentary tendency to preservation, rather than to destruction, which I have mostly heard complained of.

8. "The State undertakes the carriage and delivery of letters. Would it be just as consistent and advisable for the State to undertake the supply of unadulterated and wholesome food, clean and healthy dwellings, elementary, industrial, and scientific instruction, medical assistance, a national paper money, and other necessities?"

Ans. All most desirable. But the tax-gatherers would have a busy life of it!

9. "Should not a State represent the co-operation of all the people of a country, for the benefit of all?"

Ans. You mean, I suppose, by "a State" the Government of a State. The Government cannot "represent" such co-operation; but can enforce it, and should.

10. "Is the use of scarce metals as material of which to make 'currency,' economical and beneficent to a nation?"

Ans. No; but often necessary: see *Munera Pulveris*, chap. iii.

11. "Is that a right condition of a people, their laws, and their money which makes 'interest' for use of money legal and possible to obtain?"

Ans. See *Fors Clavigera*, throughout, which indeed I have written to save you the trouble of asking questions on such subjects.

It might be well if my Republican correspondent, for his own benefit, would write down an exact definition of the following terms used by him :—

1. "Private property."
2. "Tax."
3. "State."

LETTER XXVI

CROCUS AND ROSE

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,
3rd January, 1873.

"BY St. George," said the English, "you say true!"

If, by the same oath, the English could still, now-a-days, both say and do true, themselves, it would be a merrier England. I hear from those of my acquaintance who are unhappy enough to be engaged in commercial operations, that their correspondents are "failing in all directions."

Failing! What business has *any*body to fail?

I observe myself to be getting into the habit of always thinking the last blockheadism I hear, or think of, the biggest. But this system of mercantile credit, invented simply to give power and opportunity to rogues, and enable them to live upon the wreck of honest men—was ever anything like it in the world before? That the wretched, impatient, scrambling idiots, calling themselves commercial men, forsooth, should not be able so much as to see this plainest of all facts, that any given sum of money will be as serviceable to commerce in the pocket of the seller of the goods, as of the buyer; and that nobody

gains one farthing by "credit" in the long run. It is precisely as great a loss to commerce that every seller has to wait six months for his money, as it is a gain to commerce that every buyer should keep his money six months in his pocket. In reality there is neither gain nor loss—except by roguery, when the gain is all to the rogue, and the loss to the true man.

In all wise commerce, payment, large or small, should be over the counter. If you can't pay for a thing—don't buy it. If you can't get paid for it—don't sell it. So, you will have calm days, drowsy nights, all the good business you have now, and none of the bad.

(Just as I am correcting this sheet I get a lovely illuminated circular, printed in blue and red, from Messrs. Howell, James, and Co., silk mercers, &c., to the Royal Family, which respectfully announces that their half-yearly clearance sale

COMMENCES JANUARY 27th.

and continues one month, and that THE WHOLE OF THE VALUABLE STOCK WILL BE COMPLETELY OVERHAULED, AND LARGE PORTIONS SUBJECTED TO SUCH REDUCTIONS IN PRICE, AS WILL ENSURE THEIR BEING DISPOSED OF PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE APPROACHING SPRING SEASON. EACH DEPARTMENT WILL PRESENT SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS IN THE WAY OF BARGAINS,

AND LADIES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY OF PURCHASING THE HIGHEST CLASS OF GOODS AT PRICES QUITE AS LOW AS THOSE OF INFERIOR MANUFACTURE. What a quite beautiful and generally satisfactory commercial arrangement, most obliging H. and J. !)

If, however, for the nonce, you chance to have such a thing as a real "pound" in your own pocket, besides the hypothetical pounds you have in other people's—put it on the table, and let us look at it together.

As a piece of mere die-cutting, that St. George is one of the best bits of work we have on our money.* But as a design,—how brightly comic it is! The horse looking abstractedly into the air, instead of where precisely it *would* have looked, at the beast between its legs: St. George, with nothing but his helmet on, (being the last piece of armour he is likely to want,) putting his naked feet, at least his feet showing their toes through the buskins, well forward, that the dragon may with the greatest convenience get a bite at them; and about to deliver a mortal blow at him with a sword which cannot reach him by a couple of yards,—or, I think, in George III.'s piece, with a field-marshal's truncheon.

Victor Carpaccio had other opinions on the likelihood of matters in this battle. His St. George exactly reverses the practice of ours. He rides

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* The best is on George III.'s pound, 1820; the most finished in work on George IV.'s crown-piece, 1821.

armed, from shoulder to heel, in proof—but *without* his helmet. For the real difficulty in dragon-fights, as you shall hear, is not so much to kill your dragon, as to *see* him; at least to see him in time, it being too probable that he will see you first. Carpaccio's St. George will have his eyes about him, and his head free to turn this way or that. He meets his dragon at the gallop—catches him in the mouth with his lance—carries him backwards off his fore feet, with the spear point out at the back of his neck. But Victor Carpaccio had seen knights tilting; and poor Pistrucci, who designed this St. George for us, though he would have been a good sculptor in luckier circumstances, had only seen them presenting addresses as my Lord Mayor and killing turtle instead of dragon.

And, to our increasing sorrow, modern literature is as unsatisfactory in its picturing of St. George as modern art. Here is Mr. Emerson's bas-relief of the Saint, given in his 'English Traits,' a book occasionally wise, and always observant as to matters actually proceeding in the world; but thus, in its ninth chapter, calumnious of our Georgic faith:

"George of Cappadocia, born at Epiphania in Cilicia, was a low parasite, who got a lucrative contract to supply the army with bacon. A rogue and informer; he got rich, and was forced to run from justice. He saved his money, embraced Arianism, collected a library, and got promoted by a faction to the episcopal throne of Alexandria. When Julian came, A.D. 361, George was dragged

to prison. The prison was burst open by the mob, and George was lynched, as he deserved. And this precious knave became in good time, Saint George of England—patron of chivalry, emblem of victory and civility, and the pride of the best blood of the modern world!"

Here is a goodly patron of our dainty doings in Hanover Square! If all be indeed as our clear-sighted, unimaginative American cousin tells us. But if all *be* indeed so, what conclusion would our American cousin draw from it? The sentence is amusing—the facts (*if* facts) surprising. But what is to follow? Mr. Emerson's own conclusion is "that nature trips us up when we strut." But that is, in the first place, untrue absolutely, for Nature teaches all cock-sparrows, and their like, (who are many) to strut; and never without wholesome effect on the minds of hen-sparrows, and their like, who are likewise many. But in its relative, if not absolute, truth, is this the conclusion here wisely to be gathered? Are "chivalry, victory, civility, and the pride of the best blood of the modern world," generally to be described as "strutting"? And is the discovery of the peculations of George of Cilicia a wholesome reproof, administered by nature, to those unnatural modes of thinking and feeling?

Mr. Emerson does not think so. No modern person has truer instinct for heroism than he: nay, he is the only man I know of, among all who ever looked at books of mine, who had nobleness enough

to understand and believe the story of Turner's darkening his own picture that it might not take the light out of Lawrence's. The level of vulgar English temper is now sunk so far below the power of doing such a thing, that I never told the story yet, in general society, without being met by instant and obstinate questioning of its truth, if not by quiet incredulity. But men with "the pride of the best blood of England" can believe it; and Mr. Emerson believes it. And yet this chivalry, and faith, and fire of heart, recognised by him as existent, confuse themselves in his mind with effete Gothic tradition; and are all "tripped up" by his investigation, itself superficial, of the story of St. George. In quieter thought, he would have felt that the chivalry and victory, being themselves real, must have been achieved, at some time or another, by a real chevalier and victor,—nay, by thousands of chevaliers and victors. That instead of one St. George, there must have been armies of St. Georges;—that this vision of a single Knight was as securely the symbol of knights innumerable, as the one Dragon of sins and trials innumerable; and no more depended for its vitality, or virtue, on the behaviour of George of Cilicia than the terror of present temptation depends on the natural history of the rattlesnake. And farther, being an American, he should have seen that the fact of the Christian world's having made a bishop of a speculating bacon-seller, and afterwards kept reverent record of this false St. George, but only obscure record of

its real St. Georges, was by no means an isolated fact in the history of the Christian world,—but rather a part of its confirmed custom and "practical education;" and that, only the other day, St. James Fiske, canonised tearfully in America, and bestrewn with tuberoses and camellias, as above described, (XV. Vol. I. p. 304,) was a military gentleman of exactly the type of the Cilician St. George.

Farther. How did it never occur to Mr. Emerson that, whether his story of the book-collecting bishop were true or not, it was certainly not the story told to Cœur-de-Lion, or to Edward III. when they took St. George for their Master? No book-collecting episcopal person, had he been ever so much a Saint, would have served *them* to swear by, or to strike by. They must have heard some other story;—not, perhaps, one written down, nor needing to be written. A remembered story,—yet, probably, a little truer than the written one; and a little older.

It is, above all, strange that the confusion of his own first sentence did not strike him, "George of Cappadocia, born in Cilicia." It is true that the bacon-selling and book-collecting Arian Bishop was born in Cilicia, and that this Arian Bishop was called George. But the Arians only contrived to get this Bishop of theirs thought of as a saint at all, because there was an antecedent St. George, with whom he might be confused; a St. George, indeed, "of Cappadocia;" and as it chanced that their own bishop came out of Cappadocia to his

bishopric, very few years after his death sufficed to render the equivocation possible. But the real St. George had been martyred seventy years before, A.D. 290, whereas the Arian bishop was killed in 361. And *this* is the story of the real St. George, which filled the heart of the early Christian church, and was heard by Cœur-de-Lion and by Edward III., somewhat in this following form, it, luckily for *us*, having been at least once fairly written out, in the tenth century, by the best Eastern scholar who occupied himself with the history of Saints. I give you an old English translation of it, rather than my own, from p. 132 of the "Historie of that most famous Saint and Soldier of Christ Jesus, St. George of Cappadocia, asserted from the fictions of the middle ages of the Church, and opposition of the present, by Peter Heylyn; printed in London for Henry Seyle, and to be sold at his shop the signe of the Tyger's head in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1631."

"St. George was born in Cappadocia, of Christian parents, and those not of the meanest qualitie: by whom he was brought up in true Religion, and the feare of God. Hee was no sooner past his Childhood, but hee lost his father, bravely encountring with the enemies of Christ; and thereupon departed with his afflicted Mother into Palestine, whereof she was a native; and where great fortunes and a faire inheritance did fall unto him. Thus qualified in birth, and being also of an able bodie, and of an age fit for employment in the warres; hee was

made a Colonell." (This word is explained in Letter XV. Vol. I. p. 305.) "In which employment hee gave such testimonies of his valour, and behav'd himselfe so nobly; that forthwith Diocletian, not knowing yet that he was a Christian, advanc'd him to the place and dignitie of his Councell for the warres; (for so on good authoritie I have made bold to render 'Comes' in this place and time). About this time his Mother dyed: and hee, augmenting the heroicke resolutions of his mind, with the increase of his revenue, did presently applie himselfe unto the Court and service of his Prince; his twentieth yeere being even then compleat and ended.

"But Diocletian being soon after compelled into his persecution of the Christians" (Heylyn now gives abstract of his author,) "and warrants granted out unto the officers and rulers of the Provinces to speed the execution, and that done also in frequent senate, the Emperour there himself in person, St. George, though not yet sainted, could continue no longer, but there exposed himself unto their fury and his owne glory:" (Translation begins again.)

"When therefore George, even in the first beginnings, had observ'd the extraordinarie cruelty of these proceedings, hee presently put off his military habiliments, and, making dole of all his substance to the poore, on the third Session of the Senate, when the Imperiall decree was to be verified, quite voide of feare, he came into the Senate-house, and spake unto them in this manner. 'How long,

most noble Emperour and you Conscript Fathers, will you augment your tyrannies against the Christians? How long will you enact unjust and cruell Lawes against them, compelling those which are aright instructed in the faith, to follow that Religion, of whose truth your selves are doubtfull? Your Idols are no Gods, and I am bold to say againe, they are not. Be not you longer couzned in the same errour. Our Christ alone is God, He only is the Lord, in the glory of the Father. Eyther do you therefore acknowledge that Religion which undoubtedly is true: or else disturbe not them by your raging follies, which would willingly embrace it.' This said, and all the Senate wonderfully amazed at the free speech and boldnesse of the man;" (and no wonder;—my own impression is indeed that most martyrs have been made away with less for their faith than their incivility. I have always a lurking sympathy with the Heathen;) "they all of them turn'd their eyes upon the Emperour, expecting what hee would reply: who beckoning to Magnentius, then Consull, and one of his speciall Favourites, to returne an answere; hee presently applyed himselfe to satisfie his Prince's pleasure.

"Further" (says Heylyn) "we will not prosecute the storie in our Authors words, which are long and full of needlesse conference; but will briefly declare the substance of it, which is this. Upon St. George's constant profession of his Faith, they wooed him first with promises of future honours,

and more faire advancements: but finding him unmoveable, not to be wrought upon with words, they tried him next with torments: not sparing anything which might expresse their cruelty, or enoble his affliction. When they saw all was fruitlesse, at last the fatall Sentence was pronounced against him in this manner: that, beeing had againe to prison, hee should the following day be drawne through the City and beheaded.

"Which sentence was accordingly performed, and George invested with the glorious Crowne of Martyrdome upon the 23. day of April, Anno Domini nostri 290."

That is St. George's 'true' story, how far literally true is of no moment; it is enough for us that a young soldier, in early days of Christianity, put off his armour, and gave up his soul to his Captain, Christ: and that his death did so impress the hearts of all Christian men who heard of it, that gradually he became to them the leader of a sacred soldiership, which conquers more than its mortal enemies, and prevails against the poison, and the shadow, of Pride, and Death.

And above all, his putting off his knight's armour, especially the military belt, as then taking service with Christ instead of the Roman Emperor, impressed the minds of the later Christian knights; because of the law referred to by St. Golden-Lips, (quoted by Heylyn farther on): "No one who is an officer would dare to appear without his zone and mantle before him who wears the diadem." So

that having thus voluntarily humbled himself, he is thought of as chiefly exalted among Christian soldiers, and called, not only "the *great* Martyr," but the "Standard-Bearer," (Tropæophorus.) Whence he afterwards becomes the knight bearing the bloody cross on the argent field, and the Captain of Christian war.

The representation of all his spiritual enemies under the form of the Dragon was simply the natural habit of the Greek mind: the stories of Apollo delivering Latona from the Python, and of Perseus delivering Andromeda from the sea monster, had been as familiar as the pitcher and winecups they had been painted on, in red and black, for a thousand years before: and the name of St. George, the "Earthworker," or "Husbandman," * connected him instantly, in Greek thoughts, not only with the ancient dragon, Erichthonius, but with the Spirit of agriculture, called "Thricewarrior," to whom the dragon was a harnessed creature of toil. Yet, so far as I know, it was not until the more strictly Christian tradition of the armed archangel Michael confused its symbolism with that of the armed saint, that the dragon enters definitely into the story of St. George. The authoritative course of Byzantine painting, sanctioned and restricted by the Church in the treatment of every subject, invariably represents

* More properly 'named from the husbandman.' Thus Lycus is 'a wolf,' Lycius, named from the 'wolf,' or 'wolfish.' So, Georgus is 'a husbandman,' Georgius, 'named from the husbandman,' or 'husbandmanish.'

St. George as the soldier Martyr, or witness, before Diocletian, never as victor over the dragon:* his story, as the painters tell it, corresponds closely with that of St. Catherine of Sinai;† and is, in the root of it, truth, and in the branching of it, beautiful dream, of the same wild and lovely character. And we might as well confuse Catherine of Sinai with Catherine of Siena, (or for that matter, Catherine de Medicis!) as St. George of the Eastern Church with George the Arian. And this witness of painting remains simple and unbroken, down to the last days of Venice. St. Mark, St. Nicholas, and St. George are the three saints who are seen, in the vision of the Fisherman, delivering Venice from the fiends. St. George, first "of the seaweed," has three other churches besides in Venice; and it will

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* See the complete series of subjects as given by M. Didron in his "Iconographie Chrêtienne" (8vo, Paris, 1845, p. 369), and note the most interesting trace of the idea of Triptolemus, in the attendant child with the water-pitcher behind the equestrian figures of the Saint.

† You will find that in my 19th letter, Vol. I. p. 376, I propose that our St. George's Company in England shall be under the patronage also of St. Anthony in Italy. And in general, we will hold ourselves bound to reverence, in one mind, with Carpaccio and the good Painters and Merchants of Venice, the eight great Saints of the Greek Church,—namely (in the order M. Didron gives them)—the Archangel Michael, the Precursor (John Baptist), St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Nicholas, St. George, Ste. Catherine of Sinai, and St. Anthony, these being patrons of our chief occupations, (while, over our banking operations we will have for patron or principal manager, the more modern Western Saint, Francis of Assisi;) meaning always no disrespect to St. Jerome or Ste. Cecilia, in case we need help in our literature or music.

be the best work I have ever done in this broken life of mine, if I can some day show you, however dimly, how Victor Carpaccio has painted him in the humblest of these,—the little chapel of St. George on the "Shore of the Slaves." There, however, our dragon does not fail us, both Carpaccio and Tintoret having the deepest convictions on that subject;—as all strong men *must* have; for the Dragon is too true a creature, to all such, spiritually. That it is an indisputably living and venomous creature, materially, has been the marvel of the world, innocent and guilty, not knowing what to think of the terrible worm; nor whether to worship it, as the Rod of their lawgiver, or to abhor it as the visible symbol of the everlasting Disobedience.

Touching which mystery, you must learn one or two main facts.

The word 'Dragon' means "the Seeing Creature," and I believe the Greeks had the same notion in their other word for a serpent, "ophis." There were many other creeping, and crawling, and rampant things; the olive stem and the ivy were serpentine enough, blindly; but here was a creeping thing that saw!

The action of the cobra, with its lifted and levelled head, and the watchfulness of the coiled viper impressed the Egyptians and Greeks intensely. To the Egyptian the serpent was awful and sacred, and became the ornament on the front of the King's diadems (though an evil spirit also, when not *erect*). The Greeks never could make up their minds about

it. All human life seems to them as the story of Laocoon. The fiery serpents slay us for our wisdom and fidelity;—then writhe themselves into rest at the feet of the Gods.

The Egyptians were at the same pause as to their Nile Dragon, for whom I told you they built their labyrinth. "For in the eyes of some of the Egyptians, the crocodiles are sacred; but by others they are held for enemies. And it is they who dwell by the Lake Mœris, who think them greatly sacred. Every one of these lake people has care of his own crocodile, taught to be obedient to the lifting of finger. And they put jewels of enamel and gold into their ears, and bracelets on their forefeet, and feed them with the sacred shew-bread daily, and attend upon them, that they may live beautiful lives; and, when they die, bury them, embalmed, in holy tombs." (Thus religion, as a pious friend, I observe, writes in a Devonshire paper the other day, leads to the love of Nature!) "But they of the city Elephantine eat their crocodiles, holding them nowise sacred. Neither do they call them crocodiles, but 'champsæ;' it is the Ionians who call them 'crocodiles,' because they think them like the little crocodiles that live in the dry stone walls."

I do not know if children generally have strong associative fancy about words; but when I was a child, that word 'Crocodile' always seemed to me very terrific, and I would even hastily, in any book, turn a leaf in which it was printed with a capital C.

If anybody had but told me the meaning of it —"a creature that is afraid of crocuses!"

That, at least, is all I can make of it, now; though I can't understand how this weakness of the lizard mind was ever discovered, for lizards never *see* crocuses, that I know of. The next I meet in Italy, (poor little, glancing, panting things, —I miss them a little here from my mossy walls)— shall be shown an artificial crocus, Paris-made; we will see what it thinks of it! But however it came to be given, for the great Spirit-Lizard, the name is a good one. For as the wise German's final definition of the Devil (in the second part of Faust) is that he is afraid of Roses, so the earliest and simplest possible definition of him is that in spring time he is afraid of crocuses; which I am quite sure, both our farmers and manufacturers are now, in England, to the utmost. On the contrary, the Athenian Spirit of Wisdom was so fond of crocuses that she made her own robe crocus-colour, before embroidering it with the wars of the Giants; she being greatly antagonistic to the temper which dresses sisters of charity in black, for a crocus-colour dress was much the gayest—not to say the giddiest — thing she could possibly wear in Athens.

And of the crocus, vernal, and autumnal, more properly the enchanted herb of Colchis, (see by the way, White's 'History of Selborne' at the end of its 41st letter) I must tell you somewhat more in next letter; meantime, look at the saffron crest

in the centre of it, carefully, and read, with some sympathy, if you can, this true story of a crocus, which being told me the other day by one who, whether I call him friend or not, is indeed friendly to me, and to all whom he can befriend, I begged him to write it for your sakes, which he has thus graciously done.—

A STORY OF A FLOWER.

"IT is impossible to describe the delight which I took in my first flower, yet it was only a poor peeky little sprouting crocus. Before I begin the story, I must, in two lines, make known my needy state at the time when I became the owner of the flower. I was in my eleventh year, meanly clothed, plainly fed, and penniless; an errand boy in receipt of one shilling and sixpence a week, which sum I consumed in bread and shoe leather. Yet I was happy enough, living in a snug cottage in the suburbs of Oxford, within sight of its towers, and within hearing of its bells. In the back yard of my home were many wonders. The gable end of a barn was mantled with ivy, centuries old, and sparrows made their home in its leafage; an ancient wall, old as the Norman tower at the other end of the town, was rich in gilly-flowers; a wooden shed, with red tiles, was covered by a thriving 'tea tree,' so we called it, which in summer was all blossom, pendant mauve-coloured blossoms. This tree managed to interlace its branches among the tiles so effectively

as in the end to lift off the whole roof in a mass, and poise it in the air. Bees came in swarms to sip honey at the blossoms: I noted civilized hive bees, and large ones whose waxen cells were hidden in mossy banks in the woods—these had crimson and saffron tinted bodies, or, for variety, hairy shapes of sombre green and black. I was never weary of my wall-flowers, and bees, and butterflies. But, so it is, I happened one day to get a glimpse of a college garden about the end of February, or the beginning of March, when its mound of venerable elms was lit up with star-like yellow flowers. The dark earth was robed as with a bright garment of imperial, oriental splendour. It was the star-shaped aconite, as I believe, but am not sure, whose existence in flower is brief, but glorious, when beheld, as I beheld it, in masses. Henceforth, if Old Fidget, the gardener, was not at the back gate of St. J——, I peeped through the keyhole at my yellow garden bed, which seemed flooded with sunlight, only broken by patches of rich black earth, which formed strange patterns, such as we see on Japanese screens of lacquer and bronze, only that the flowers had a glory of their own. Well, I looked through the keyhole every time I passed, and that was four times daily, and always with increased interest for my flowering aconite. But oh! trouble upon trouble, one day I found the keyhole stopt, and there was an end to my daily joy, and of the interest which had been awakened in me, in a new way, for the wonders of nature.

My love of flowers, however, increased, and I found means to feed my love. I had often observed Old Fidget, the head gardener, and his mates, bring out wheelbarrow loads of refuse from the shrubbery and flower beds and throw them in a heap along the garden wall without, where a long deep trench had become the well-known receptacle for rubbish. Such places were common in town suburbs in those days. The rubbish consisted of cuttings of shrubs and plants, and rakings of flower-borders, but more beautifully, of elm leaves, and the cast-off clothing of chestnut trees, which soon lay rotting in flaky masses, until I happened to espy a fragment of a bulb, and then, the rubbish of the garden, which concealed sprouting chestnuts, knew no rest. I went, one holiday, and dug deep, with no other implement than my hands, into this matted mass. I laboured, till at length, in a mass of closely pressed leaves, I came upon a perfect crocus. It lay like a dead elfin infant in its forest grave. I was enchanted, and afraid to touch it, as one would fear to commit a piece of sacrilege. It lay in its green robes, which seemed spun from dainty silken threads unsoiled by mortal hands. Its blossom of pale flesh tint lay concealed within a creamy opalescent film, which seemed to revive and live when the light penetrated the darksome tomb, contrasting with the emerald robes, and silken, pliant roots. At length I lifted the flower from its bed, and carried it to my garden plot with breathless care. My garden plot, not much larger

than a large baking dish, was enclosed by broken tiles, a scrubby place, unsuited to my newly discovered treasure. I broke up the earth and pulverised it with my fingers, but its coarseness was incurable. I abandoned it as I thought of some mole hills in a neigbouring copse, and soon my plot was filled deeply with soft sandy soil, fit for my flower. And then came the necessity of protecting it from the searching March winds, which I did effectually by covering it with a flower-pot, and the season wore on, and soft, mild days set in apace, and my flower, which was ever uppermost in my thoughts, whether sleeping or waking, began to show signs of life, as day by day I permitted the sun to look at it, until at length, one sunny, silent, Sunday morning, it opened its glowing, golden, sacramental cup, gleaming like light from heaven—dropt in a dark place, living light and fire. So it seemed to my poor vision, and I called the household and the neighbours from their cares to share my rapture. But alas! my dream was ended; the flower had no fascination for those who came at my call. It was but a yellow crocus to them—some laughed, some tittered, some jeered me, and old Dick Willis, poor man, who got a crust by selling soft water by the pail, he only rubbed his dim eyes, and exclaimed in pity, 'God bless the poor boy!'"

Little thinking how much he was already blessed, —he—and his flower!

For indeed Crocus and Carduus are alike

Benedict flowers, if only one knew God's gold and purple from the Devil's, which, with St. George's help, and St. Anthony's,—the one well knowing the flowers of the field, and the other those of the desert,—we will try somewhat to discern.

LETTER XXVII

CHRIST'S LODGINGS

BRANTWOOD,
27th January, 1873.

"IF it were not so, I would have told you."

I read those strange words of St. John's gospel this morning, for at least the thousandth time; and for the first time, that I remember, with any attention. It is difficult, if not impossible, to attend rightly without some definite motive, or chance-help, to words which one has read and re-read till every one of them slips into its place unnoticed, as a familiar guest,—unchallenged as a household friend. But the Third Fors helped me, to-day, by half effacing the n in the word Mona, in the tenth century MS. I was deciphering; and making me look at the word, till I began to think of it, and wondered. You may as well learn the old meaning of that pretty name of the isle of Anglesea. "In my Father's house," says Christ, "are many monas,"—remaining-places—"if it were not so, I would have told you."

Alas, had He but told us more clearly that it *was* so!

I have the profoundest sympathy with St. Thomas,

and would fain put all his questions over again, and twice as many more. "We know not whither Thou goest." That Father's house,—where is it? These "remaining-places," how are they to be prepared for us?—how are we to be prepared for them?

If ever your clergy mean really to help you to read your Bible,—the whole of it, and not merely the bits which tell you that you are miserable sinners, and that you needn't mind,—they must make a translation retaining as many as possible of the words in their Greek form, which you may easily learn, and yet which will be quit of the danger of becoming debased by any vulgar English use. So also, the same word must always be given when it *is* the same; and not in one place translated "mansion," and in another "abode." (Compare verse 23 of this same chapter.*) Not but that "mansion" is a very fine Latin word, and perfectly correct, (if only one knows Latin,) but I doubt not that most parish children understand by it, if anything, a splendid house with two wings, and an acre or two of offices, in the middle of a celestial park; and suppose that some day or other they are all of them to live in such, as well as the Squire's children; whereas, if either "mona" or "remaining" were put in both verses, it is just possible that sometimes both the Squire and the

* "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Our mona,—as in the 2nd verse (John xiv.)

children, instead of vaguely hoping to be lodged some day in heaven by Christ and His Father, might take notice of their offer in the last verse I have quoted, and get ready a spare room both in the mansion and cottage, to offer Christ and His Father immediately, if they liked to come into lodgings on earth.

I was looking over some of my own children's books the other day, in the course of re-arranging the waifs and strays of Denmark Hill at Brantwood; and came upon a catechism of a very solemn character on the subject of the County of Kent. It opens by demanding "the situation of Kent;" then, the extent of Kent,—the population of Kent, and a sketch of the history of Kent; in which I notice with interest that hops were first grown in Kent in 1524, and petitioned against as a wicked weed in 1528. Then, taking up the subject in detail, inquiry is made as to "the situation of Dover?" To which the orthodox reply is that Dover is pleasantly situated on that part of the island of Great Britain nearest the Continent, and stands in a valley between stupendous hills. To the next question, "What is the present state of Dover?" the well-instructed infant must answer, "That Dover consists of two parts, the upper, called the Town, and the lower, the Pier; and that they are connected by a long narrow street, which, from the rocks that hang over it, and seem to threaten the passenger with destruction, has received the name of Snaregate

Street." The catechism next tests the views of the young respondent upon the municipal government of Dover, the commercial position of Dover, and the names of the eminent men whom Dover has produced; and at last, after giving a proper account of the Castle of Dover and the two churches in Dover, we are required to state whether there is not an interesting relic of antiquity in the vicinity of Dover; upon which, we observe that, about two miles north-west from Dover, are the remains of St. Radagune's Abbey, now converted into a farm-house; and finally, to the crucial interrogation—"What nobleman's seat is near Dover?" we reply, with more than usual unction, that "In the Parish of Waldershaw, five miles and a half from Dover, is Waldershaw Park, the elegant seat of the Earl of Guildford, and that the house is a magnificent structure, situated in a vale, in the centre of a well-wooded Park." Whereat I stopped reading; first, because St. Radagune's Abbey, though it is nothing but walls with a few holes through them by which the cows get in for shelter on windy days, was the first "remaining" of Antiquity I ever sketched, when a boy of fourteen, spending half my best BB pencil on the ivy and the holes in the walls; and, secondly, the tone of these two connected questions in the catechism marks exactly the curious period in the English mind when the worship of St. Radagune was indeed utterly extinct, so that *her* once elegant mansion becomes a farm-house, as in that guise fulfilling its now legitimate function:—but the worship

of Earls of Guildford is still so flourishing that no idea would ever occur to the framers of catechism that the elegant seats of these also were on the way to become farm-houses.

Which is nevertheless surely the fact: — and the only real question is whether St. Radagune's mansion and the Earl of Guildford's are both to be farm-houses, or whether the state of things at the time of the Dover Catechism may not be exactly reversed, — and St. Radagune have her mansion and park railed in again, while the Earl's walls shelter the cows on windy days. For indeed, from the midst of the tumult and distress of nations, fallen wholly Godless and lordless, perhaps the first possibility of redemption may be by cloistered companies, vowed once more to the service of a divine Master, and to the reverence of His saints.

You were shocked, I suppose, by my catalogue, in last Fors, of such persons, as to be revered by our own Company. But have you ever seriously considered what a really vital question it is to you whether St. Paul and St. Pancras, (not that I know myself at this moment, who St. Pancras was, —but I'll find out for next Fors,)—St. George and St. Giles, St. Bridget and St. Helen, are really only to become the sponsors of City parishes, or whether you mean still to render them any gratitude as the first teachers of what used to be called civilization; nay, whether there may not even be, irrespective of what we *now* call civilization — namely, coals and meat at famine prices,—some

manner of holy living and dying, of lifting holy hands without wrath, and sinking to blessed sleep without fear, of which these persons, however vaguely remembered, have yet been the best patterns the world has shown us.

Don't think that I want to make Roman Catholics of you, or to make anything of you, except honest people. But as for the vulgar and insolent Evangelical notion, that one should not care for the Saints,—nor pray to them,—Mercy on us!—do the poor wretches fancy that God wouldn't be thankful if they would pray to *anybody*, for what it was right they should have; or that *He* is piqued, forsooth, if one thinks His servants can help us sometimes, in our paltry needs?

"But they are dead, and cannot help us, nor hear!"

Alas; perchance—no. What would I not give to be so much a heretic as to believe the Dead *could* hear!—but are there no living Saints, then, who can help you? Sir C. Dilke, or Mr. Beales, for instance? and if you don't believe there are any parks or monas abiding for you in heaven, may you not pull down some park railings here, and—hold public meetings in them, of a Paradisiacal character?

Indeed, that pulling down of the Piccadilly railings was a significant business. "Park," if you will look to your Johnson, you will find is one of quite the oldest words in Europe; vox antiquissima, a most ancient word, and now a familiar one among

active nations. French, Parc, Welsh, the same, Irish, Pairc, being "a piece of ground enclosed and stored with wild beasts of chase." Manwood, in his Forest Law, defines it thus, "A park is a place for privilege for wild beasts of venery, and also for other wild beasts that are beasts of the forest and of the chase, and those wild beasts are to have a firm peace and protection there, so that no man may hurt or chase them within the park, without licence of the owner: a park is of another nature than either a chase or a warren; for a park *must be enclosed*, and may not lie open—if it does, it is a good cause of seizure into the King's hands." Or into King Mob's for parliamentary purposes—and how monstrous, you think, that such pleasant habitations for wild beasts should still be walled in, and in peace, while you have no room to—speak in,—I had like to have said something else than speak—but it is at least polite to you to call it 'speaking.'

Yes. I have said so, myself, once or twice;—nevertheless something is to be said for the beasts also. What do you think they were made for? All these spotty, scaly, finned, and winged, and clawed things, that grope between you and the dust, that flit between you and the sky. These motes in the air—sparks in the sea—mists and flames of life. The flocks that are your wealth—the moth that frets it away. The herds upon a thousand hills,—the locust,—and the worm, and the wandering plague whose spots are worlds. The creatures that mock

you, and torment. The creatures that serve and love you, (or would love if they might,) and obey. The joys of the callow nests and burrowed homes of Earth. The rocks of it, built out of its own dead. What is the meaning to you of all these,—what their worth to you?

No worth, you answer, perhaps; or the contrary of worth. In fact, you mean to put an end to all that. You will keep pigeons to shoot—geese to make pies of—cocks for fighting—horses to bet on—sheep for wool, and cows for cheese. As to the rest of the creatures, you owe no thanks to Noah; and would fain, if you could, order a special deluge for their benefit; failing that, you will at all events get rid of the useless feeders as fast as possible.

Indeed, there is some difficulty in understanding why some of them were made. I lost great part of my last hour for reading, yesterday evening, in keeping my kitten's tail out of the candles,—a useless beast, and still more useless tail—astonishing and inexplicable even to herself. Inexplicable, to me, all of them—heads and tails alike. "Tiger—tiger—burning bright"—is this then all you were made for—this ribbed hearthrug, tawny and black!

If only the Rev. James McCosh were here! His book is; and I'm sure I don't know how, but it turns up in re-arranging my library. 'Method of the Divine Government Physical and Moral.' Preface begins. "We live in an age in which the reflecting portion of mankind are much addicted to the contemplation of the works of Nature. It is

the object of the author in this Treatise to interrogate Nature with the view of making her utter her voice in answer to some of the most important questions which the inquiring spirit of man can put." Here is a catechumen for you!—and a catechist! Nature with her hands behind her back—Perhaps Mr. McCosh would kindly put it to her about the tiger. Farther on, indeed, it is stated that the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and I observe that the author, with the shrinking modesty characteristic of the clergy of his persuasion, feels that even the intellect of a McCosh cannot, without risk of error, embrace *more* than the present method of the Divine management of Creation. Wherefore "no man," he says, "should presume to point out *all* the ways in which a God of unbounded resources might govern the universe."

But the present way—(allowing for the limited capital,)—we *may* master that, and pay our compliments to God upon it? We will hope so; in the meantime I can assure you, this creation of His will bear more looking at than you have given, yet, however addicted you may be to the contemplation of Nature; (though I suspect you are more addicted to the tasting of her,) and that if instead of being in such a hurry to pull park railings down, you would only beg the owners to put them to their proper use, and let the birds and beasts, which were made to breathe English air as well as you, take shelter there, you would soon have

a series of National Museums more curious than that in Great Russell Street; and with something better worth looking at in them than the sacred crocodiles. Besides, you might spare the poor beasts a little room on earth, for charity, if not for curiosity. *They* have no mansions preparing for them elsewhere.

What! you answer; indignant,—"All that good land given up to beasts!" Have you ever looked how much or little of England *is* in park land? I have here, by me, Hall's Travelling Atlas of the English Counties; which paints conveniently in red the railroads, and in green the parks (not conscious, probably—the colourist—of his true expression of antagonism by those colours).

The parks lie on the face of each county like a few crumbs on a plate; if you could turn them all at once into corn land, it would literally not give you a mouthful extra of dinner. Your dog, or cat, is more costly to you, in proportion to your private means, than all these kingdoms of beasts would be to the nation.

"Cost what they might, it would be too much" —think you? You will not give those acres of good land to keep beasts?

Perhaps not beasts of God's making; but how many acres of good land do you suppose, then, you *do* give up, as it is, to keep beasts He never made,—never meant to be made,—the beasts you make of yourselves?

Do you know how much corn land in the United

Kingdom is occupied in supplying you with the means of getting drunk?

Mind, I am no temperance man. You should all have as much beer and alcohol as was good for you if I had my way. But the beer and alcohol which are *not* good for you,—which are the ruin of so many of you, suppose you could keep the wages you spend in that liquor in the savings bank, and left the land, now tilled to grow it for you, to natural and sober beasts?—Do you think it would be false economy?—Why, you might have a working men's park for nothing, in every county, bigger than the Queen's! and your own homes all the more comfortable.

I had no notion myself, till the other day, what the facts were, in this matter. Get, if you can, Professor Kirk's 'Social Politics,' (Hamilton, Adams, and Co.,) and read, for a beginning, his 21st chapter, on land and liquor; and then, as you have leisure, all the book, carefully. Not that he would help me out with my park plan; he writes with the simple idea that the one end of humanity is to eat and drink; and it is interesting to see a Scotch Professor thinking the lakes of his country were made to be 'Reservoirs,' and particularly instancing the satisfaction of thirsty Glasgow out of Loch Katrine; so that, henceforward, it will be proper in Scotch economical circles not to speak of the Lady of the Lake, but of the Lady of the Reservoir. Still, assuming that to eat and drink *is* the end of life, the Professor shows you clearly how much

better this end may be accomplished than it is now. And the broad fact which he brings out concerning your drink is this; that about one million five hundred thousand acres of land in the United Kingdom are occupied in producing strong liquor (and I don't see that he has included in this estimate what is under the wicked weeds of Kent; it is curious what difficulty people always seem to have in putting anything accurately into short statement). The produce of this land, which is more than all the arable for bread in Scotland, after being manufactured into drink, is sold to you at the rates,—the spirits, of twenty-seven shillings and sixpence for two shillings' worth; and the beer, of two shillings for threepence-halfpenny worth. The sum you spend in these articles, and in tobacco, annually, is ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX MILLIONS OF POUNDS; on which the pure profit of the richer classes, (putting the lower alehouse gains aside) is, roughly, a hundred millions. That is the way the rich Christian Englishman provides against the Day of Judgment, expecting to hear his Master say to him, "I was thirsty—and ye gave me drink—Two shillings' worth for twenty-seven and sixpence."

Again; for the matter of lodging. Look at the Professor's page 73. There you find that in the street dedicated in Edinburgh to the memory of the first Bishop of Jerusalem, in No. 23, there are living 220 persons. In the first floor of it live ten families,—forty-nine persons; in the second floor, nine families—fifty-four persons; and so on, up to

six floors, the ground-floor being a shop; so that "the whole 220 persons in the building are without one foot of the actual surface of the land on which to exist."

"In my Father's house," says Christ, "are many mansions." Verily, that appears to be also the case in some of His Scotch Evangelical servants' houses here. And verecund Mr. McCosh, who will not venture to suggest any better arrangement of the heavens,—has he likewise no suggestion to offer as to the arrangement of No. 23, St. James's Street?

"Whose fault is it?" do you ask?

Immediately, the fault of the landlords; but the landlords, from highest to lowest, are more or less thoughtless and ignorant persons, from whom you can expect no better. The persons really answerable for all this are your two professed bodies of teachers; namely, the writers for the public press, and the clergy.

Nearly everything that I ever did of any use in this world has been done contrary to the advice of my friends; and as my friends are unanimous at present in begging me never to write to newspapers, I am somewhat under the impression that I ought to resign my Oxford professorship, and try to get a sub-editorship in the *Telegraph*. However, for the present, I content myself with my own work, and have sustained patiently, for thirty years, the steady opposition of the public press to whatever good was in it, (said *Telegraph* always with thanks

excepted) down to the article in the *Spectator* of August 13th, 1870, which, on my endeavour to make the study of art, and of Greek literature, of some avail in Oxford to the confirmation of right principle in the minds of her youth, instantly declared that "the artistic perception and skill of Greece were nourished by the very lowness of her ethical code, by her lack of high aims, by her freedom from all aspirations after moral good, by her inability even to conceive a Hebrew tone of purity, by the fact that she lived without God, and died without hope."

"High aims" are explained by the *Spectator*, in another place, to consist in zeal for the establishment of cotton mills. And the main body of the writers for the public press are also—not of that opinion—for they have no opinions; but they get their living by asserting so much to you.

Against which testimony of theirs, you shall hear, to-day, the real opinion of a man of whom Scotland once was proud; the man who first led her to take some notice of that same reservoir of hers, which Glasgow,—Clyde not being deep enough for her drinking, or perhaps, (see above, Letter xvi. vol. I. p. 323) not being now so sweet as stolen waters,—cools her tormented tongue with.

"The poor laws into which you have ventured for the love of the country, form a sad quagmire. They are like John Bunyan's Slough of Despond, into which, as he observes, millions of cart-loads of good resolutions have been thrown, without

perceptibly mending the way. From what you say, and from what I have heard from others, there is a very natural desire to trust to one or two empirical remedies, such as general systems of education, and so forth. But a man with a broken constitution might as well put faith in Spilsburg or Godbold. It is not the knowledge, but the use which is made of it, that is productive of real benefit.

"There is a terrible evil in England to which we are strangers" (some slight acquaintance has been raked up since, Sir Walter,) "the number, to wit, of tippling houses, where the labourer, as a matter of course, spends the overplus of his earnings. In Scotland there are few; and the Justices are commendably inexorable in rejecting all application for licences where there appears no public necessity for granting them. A man, therefore, cannot easily spend much money in liquor, since he must walk three or four miles to the place of suction, and back again, which infers a sort of malice prepense of which few are capable; and the habitual opportunity of indulgence not being at hand, the habits of intemperance, and of waste connected with it, are not acquired. If financiers would admit a general limitation of the alehouses over England to one-fourth of the number, I am convinced you would find the money spent in that manner would remain with the peasant, as a source of self-support and independence. All this applies chiefly to the country; in towns, and in the manufacturing districts, the evil could hardly be

diminished by such regulations. There would, perhaps, be no means so effectual as that (which will never be listened to) of taxing the manufacturers according to the number of hands which they employ on an average, and applying the produce in maintaining the manufacturing poor. If it should be alleged that this would injure the manufacturers, I would boldly reply, — 'And why not injure, or rather limit, speculations, the excessive stretch of which has been productive of so much damage to the principles of the country, and to the population, whom it has, in so many respects, degraded and demoralized?' For a great many years, manufacturers, taken in a general point of view, have not partaken of the character of a regular profession, in which all who engaged with honest industry and a sufficient capital might reasonably expect returns proportional to their advances and labour,—but have, on the contrary, rather resembled a lottery, in which the great majority of the adventurers are sure to be losers, although some may draw considerable advantage. Men continued for a great many years to exert themselves, and to pay extravagant wages, not in hopes that there could be a reasonable prospect of an orderly and regular demand for the goods they wrought up, but in order that they might be the first to take advantage of some casual opening which might consume their cargo, let others shift as they could. Hence extravagant wages on some occasions; for these adventurers who thus played

at hit or miss, stood on no scruples while the chance of success remained open. Hence also, the stoppage of work, and the discharge of the workmen, when the speculators failed of their object. All this while the country was the sufferer;—*for whoever gained, the result, being upon the whole a loss, fell on the nation*, together with the task of maintaining a poor, rendered effeminate and vicious by over-wages and over-living, and necessarily cast loose upon society. I cannot but think that the necessity of making some fund beforehand, for the provision of those whom they debauch, and render only fit for the almshouse, in prosecution of their own adventures, though it operated as a check on the increase of manufacturers, would be a measure just in itself, and beneficial to the community. But it would never be listened to;—the weaver's beam, and the sons of Zeruiah, would be too many for the proposers.

"This is the eleventh of August; Walter, happier than he will ever be again, perhaps, is preparing for the moors. He has a better dog than Trout, and rather less active. Mrs. Scott and all our family send kind love. Yours ever. W. S."

I have italicized one sentence in this letter, written in the year 1817 (what would the writer have thought of the state of things now?)—though I should like, for that matter, to italicize it all. But that sentence touches the root of the evil which I have most at heart, in these letters, to show you; namely, the increasing poverty of the *country* through the

enriching of a few. I told you, in the first sentence of them, that the English *people* was not a rich people; that it "was empty in purse—empty in stomach." The day before yesterday, a friend, who thinks my goose pie not an economical dish! sent me a penny cookery book, a very desirable publication, which I instantly sat down to examine. It starts with the great principle that you must never any more roast your meat, but always stew it; and never have an open fire, but substitute, for the open fire, close stoves, all over England.

Now observe. There was once a dish, thought peculiarly English—Roast Beef. And once a place, thought peculiarly English—the Fireside. These two possessions are now too costly for you. Your England, in her unexampled prosperity, according to the *Morning Post*, can no longer afford either her roast beef—or her fireside. She can only afford boiled bones, and a stove-side.

Well. Boiled bones are not so bad things, neither. I know something more about *them* than the writer of the penny cookery book. Fifty years ago, Count Rumford perfectly ascertained the price, and nourishing power, of good soup; and I shall give you a recipe for Theseus' vegetable diet, and for Lycurgus' black and Esau's red pottage, for your better pot-luck. But what next?

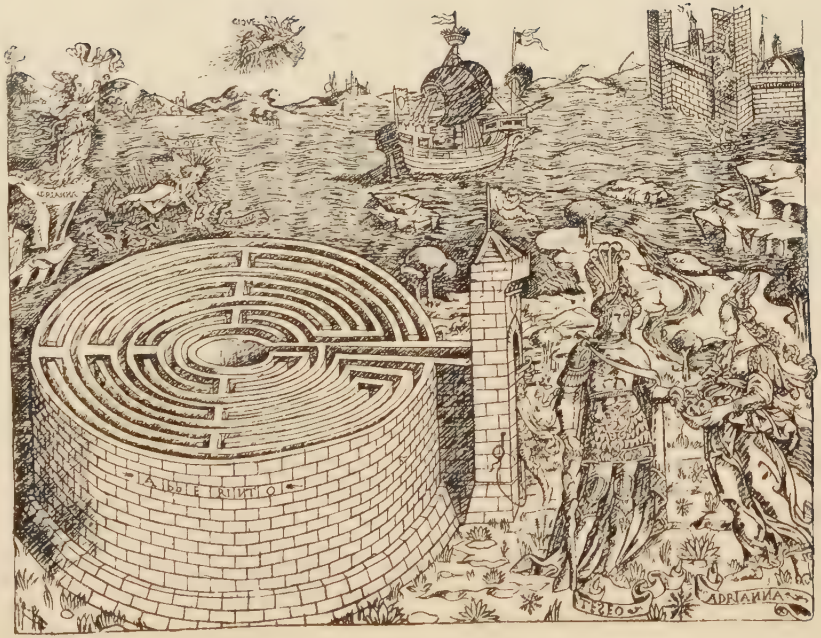
To-day, you cannot afford beef—to-morrow, are you sure that you will be still able to afford bones? If things are to go on thus, and you are to study economy to the utmost, I can beat the author of the

penny cookery book even on that ground. What say you to this diet of the Otomac Indians; persons quite of our present English character? "They have a decided aversion to cultivate the land, and live almost exclusively on hunting and fishing. They are men of a very robust constitution, and passionately fond of fermented liquors. While the waters of the Orinoco are low, they subsist on fish and turtles, but at the period of its inundations, (when the fishing ceases) they eat daily, during some months, three quarters of a pound of clay, slightly hardened by fire"*—(probably stewable in your modern stoves with better effect).—"Half, at least" (this is Father Gumilla's statement, quoted by Humboldt), "of the bread of the Otomacs and the Guamoes is clay—and those who feel a weight on their stomach, purge themselves with the fat of the crocodile, which restores their appetite, and enables them to continue to eat pure earth." "I doubt"—Humboldt himself goes on, "the manteca de caiman being a purgative. But it is certain that the Guamoes are very fond, if not of the fat, at least of the flesh, of the crocodile."

We have surely brickfields enough to keep our clay from ever rising to famine prices, in any fresh accession of prosperity;—and though fish can't live in our rivers, the muddy waters are just of the consistence crocodiles like: and, at Manchester and

* Humboldt, Personal Narrative, London, 1827, vol. v., p. 640 et seq. I quote, as always, accurately, but missing the bits I don't want.

Rochdale, I have observed the surfaces of the streams smoking, so that we need be under no concern as to temperature. I should think you might produce in them quite 'streaky' crocodile,—fat and flesh concordant,—St. George becoming a bacon purveyor, as well as seller, and laying down his dragon in salt; (indeed it appears, by an experiment made in Egypt itself, that the oldest of human words is Bacon;) potted crocodile will doubtless, also, from countries unrestrained by religious prejudices, be imported, as the English demand increases, at lower quotations; and for what you are going to receive, the Lord make you truly thankful.



THE TALE OF ADRIANE

As it was told at FLORENCE

LETTER XXVIII

SERVANTS' WAGES

BRANTWOOD,
20th Feb., 1873.

I WAS again stopped by a verse in St. John's Gospel this morning: not because I have not thought of it before, often enough; but because it bears much on our immediate business in one of its expressions,—"Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own."

His own what?

His own property, his own rights, his own opinions, his own place, I suppose one must answer? Every man in his own place; and every man acting on his own opinions; and every man having his own way. Those are somewhat your own notions of the rightest possible state of things, are they not?

And you do not think it of any consequence to ask what sort of a place your own is?

As for instance, taking the reference farther on, to the one of Christ's followers who that night, most distinctly of all that were scattered, *found* his place, and stayed in it—"This ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to *his own place*." What sort of a place?

It should interest you, surely, to ask of such things, since you all, whether you like them or not, *have* your own places; and whether you know them or not, your own opinions. It is too true that very often you fancy you think one thing, when, in reality, you think quite another. Most Christian persons, for instance, fancy they would like to be in heaven. But that is not their real opinion of the place at all. See how grave they will look if their doctor hints to them that there is the least probability of their soon going there.

And the ascertaining what you really do think yourself, and do not merely fancy you think, because other people have said so; as also the ascertaining, if every man had indeed to go to his own place, what place he would verily have to go to, are most wholesome mental exercises; and there is no objection whatever to your giving weight to that really 'private opinion,' and that really 'individual right.'

But if you ever come really to know either what you think, or what you deserve, it is ten to one but you find it as much the character of Prudence as of Charity, that she "seeketh not her own." For indeed that same apostle, who so accurately sought his own, and found it, is, in another verse, called the "Son of Loss." "Of them whom Thou gavest me, have I lost none, but the Son of Loss," says Christ (your unlucky translation, again, quenches the whole text by its poor Latinism—"perdition"). Might it not be better to lose your place than to find it, on such terms?

But, lost or found, what do you think *is* your place at this moment? Are you minded to stay in it, if you are in it? Do you mind where it is, if you are out of it? What sort of creatures do you think yourselves? How do those you call your best friends think of you, when they advise you to claim your just place in the world?

I said, two letters back, that we would especially reverence eight saints, and among them St. Paul. I was startled to hear, only a few days afterwards, that the German critics have at last positively ascertained that St. Paul was Simon Magus;—but I don't mind whether he was or not;—if he was, we have got seven saints, and one of the Magi, to reverence, instead of eight saints;—plainly and practically, whoever wrote the 13th of 1st Corinthians is to be much respected and attended to; not as the teacher of salvation by faith, still less of salvation by talking, nor even of salvation by almsgiving or martyrdom, but as the bold despiser of faith, talk-gift, and burning, if one has not love. Whereas this age of ours is so far contrary to any such Pauline doctrine that, without especial talent either for faith or martyrdom, and loquacious usually rather with the tongues of men than of angels, it nevertheless thinks to get on, not merely without love of its neighbour, but founding all its proceedings on the precise contrary of that,—love of itself, and the seeking of every man for his own,—I should say of every beast for *its* own; for your modern social science openly confesses that it no longer

considers you as men, but as having the nature of Beasts of Prey; which made me more solicitous to explain to you the significance of that word 'Park' in my last letter: for indeed you have already pulled down the railings of those small green spots of park to purpose—and in a very solemn sense, turned all England into a Park. Alas!—if it were but even so much. Parks are for beasts of the field, which can dwell together in peace: but you have made yourselves beasts of the Desert, doleful creatures, for whom the grass is green no more, nor dew falls on lawn or bank; no flowers for you—not even the bare and quiet earth to lie down on, but only the sand-drift, and the dry places which the very Devils cannot rest in. Here and there, beside our sweet English waters, the sower may still send forth the feet of the ox and the ass; but for *men* with ox's heads, and ass's heads,—not the park, for these; by no manner of means the Park; but the everlasting Pound. Every man and beast being in their own place, *that* you choose for yours.

I have given you therefore, this month, for frontispiece, the completest picture I can find of that pound or labyrinth which the Greeks supposed to have been built by Daedalus, to enclose the bestial nature, engrafted on humanity,—the Man with the Bull's head. The Greek Daedalus is the power of mechanical as opposed to imaginative art;* and this is the kind of architecture which Greeks and Florentines

* Compare XXIII. vol. i., pp. 463, 464.

alike represent him as providing for human beasts. Could anything more precisely represent the general look of your architecture now? When I come down here, to Coniston, through Preston and Wigan, it seems to me that I have seen that thing itself, only built a little higher, and smoking, or else set on its side, and spinning round, a thousand times over in the course of the day.

Then the very writing of the name of it is so like your modern education! You miss the first letter of your lives; and begin with A for apple-pie, instead of L for love; and the rest of the writing is—some little—some big—some turned the wrong way; and the sum of it all to you Perplexity. "Abberinto."

For the rest, the old Florentine engraver took the story as it ran currently, that Theseus deserted Ariadne (but, indeed, she was the letter L lost out of his life), and besides, you know if he ever *did* do anything wrong, it was all Titania's fault,—

> "Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night,
> And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,
> With Ariadne, and Antiopa?"

If you have young eyes, or will help old ones with a magnifying glass, you will find all her story told. In the front, Theseus is giving her his faith; their names, TESEO . ADRIANNA, are written beneath them. He leans on his club reversed. She brings him three balls of thread, in case one, or even two, should not be long enough.

His plumed cap means earthly victory; her winged one heavenly power and hope. Then, at the side of the arched gate of the labyrinth, Theseus has tied one end of the clue to a ring, and you see his back and left leg as he goes in. And just above, as the end of the adventure, he is sailing away from Naxos, with his black sail. On the left is the isle of Naxos, and deserted Ariadne waving Theseus back, with her scarf tied to a stick. Theseus not returning, she throws herself into the sea; you can see her feet, and her hand, still with the staff in it, as she plunges in backwards. Whereupon, winged Jupiter, GIOVE, comes down and lifts her out of the sea; you see her winged head raised to him. Then he carries her up to heaven. He holds her round the waist, but, strangely, she is not thinking of Jupiter at all, but of something above and more than Jupiter; her hands and head raised, as in some strong desire. But on the right, there is another fall, without such rising. Theseus' father throws himself into the sea from the wall of Athens, and you see *his* feet as he goes in; but there is no God to lift him out of the waves. He stays in his place, as Ariadne in hers.

"Such an absurd old picture, or old story, you never saw or heard of? The very blaze of fireworks, in which Jupiter descends, drawn with black sparks instead of white! the whole point of the thing, the 'terrific combat,' missed out of the play, and nothing, on the whole, seen, except people's

legs, as in a modern pantomime, only not to so much advantage."

That is what you think of it? Well, such as it is, that is 'fine art' (if you will take my opinion in my own business); and even this poor photograph of it is simply worth all the illustrations in your *Illustrated News* or *Illustrated Times* from one year's end to another. Worth them all—nay, there is no comparison, for these illustrated papers do you definite mischief, and the more you look at them, the worse for you. Whereas, the longer you look at this, and think of it, the more good you will get.

Examine, for instance, that absurdly tall crest of Theseus. Behind it, if you look closely, you will see that he also has the wings of hope on his helmet; but the upright plumes nearly hide them. Have you never seen anything like them before? They are five here, indeed; but you have surely met with them elsewhere,—in number, Three—those curling, upright plumes?

For that Prince who waited on his father and the French Knights in the castle of Calais, bears them in memory of the good knight and king who fought sightless at Cressy; whose bearings they were, with the motto which you knew so well, yet are so little minded to take for your own,—"I serve." Also the cap of the Knights of St. George has these white plumes 'of three falls,' but the Prince of Wales more fitly, because the meaning of the ostrich feather is order and rule; for it was seen

that, long and loose though the filaments seemed, no wind could entangle or make them disorderly. "So this plume betokeneth such an one as nothing can disturb his mind or disquiet his spirits, but is ever one and the same." Do you see how one thing bears out and fulfils another, in these thoughts and symbols of the despised people of old time? Do you recollect Froissart's words of the New Year's Feast at Calais?

"So they were served in peace, and in great leisure."

You have improved *that* state of things, at any rate. I must say so much for you, at Wolverton, and Rugby, and such other places of travellers' repose.

Theseus then, to finish with him for this time, bears these plumes specially as the Institutor of Order and Law at Athens; the Prince or beginner of the State there; and your own Prince of Wales bears them in like manner as the beginner of State with us, (the mocking and purposeful lawlessness of Henry the Fifth when Prince, yet never indeed violating law, or losing self-command, is one of the notablest signs, rightly read, in the world's history). And now I want you to consider with me very carefully the true meaning of the words he begins his State with:—

"I serve."

You have, I hope, noticed that throughout these letters addressed to you as workmen and labourers, —though I have once or twice ventured to call

myself your fellow-workman, I have oftener spoken as belonging to, and sharing main modes of thought with, those who are not labourers, but either live in various ways by their wits—as lawyers, authors, reviewers, clergymen, parliamentary orators, and the like—or absolutely in idleness on the labour of others,—as the representative Squire. And, broadly speaking, I address you as workers, and speak in the name of the rest as idlers, thus not estimating the mere wit-work as work at all: it is always play, when it is good.

Speaking to you, then, as workers, and of myself as an idler, tell me honestly whether you consider me as addressing my betters or my worses? Let us give ourselves no airs on either side. Which of us, do you seriously think, you or I, are leading the more honourable life? Would you like to lead my life rather than your own; or, if you couldn't help finding it pleasanter, would you be ashamed of yourselves for leading it? Is your place, or mine, considered as cure and sinecure, the better? And are either of us legitimately in it? I would fain know your own real opinion on these things.

But note further: there is another relation between us than that of idler and labourer; the much more direct one of Master and Servant. I can set you to any kind of work I like, whether it be good for you or bad, pleasant to you or painful. Consider, for instance, what I am doing at this very instant—half-past seven, morning, 25th February, 1873. It is a bitter black frost, the ground deep

in snow, and more falling. I am writing comfortably in a perfectly warm room; some of my servants were up in the cold at half-past five to get it ready for me; others, a few days ago, were digging my coals near Durham, at the risk of their lives; an old woman brought me my watercresses through the snow for breakfast yesterday; another old woman is going two miles through it to-day to fetch me my letters at ten o'clock. Half a dozen men are building a wall for me to keep the sheep out of my garden, and a railroad stoker is holding his own against the north wind, to fetch me some Brobdignag raspberry plants * to put in it. Somebody in the east end of London is making boots for me, for I can't wear those I have much longer; a washerwoman is in suds, somewhere, to get me a clean shirt for to-morrow; a fisherman is in dangerous weather somewhere, catching me some fish for Lent; and my cook will soon be making me pancakes, for it is Shrove Tuesday. Having written this sentence, I go to the fire, warm my fingers, saunter a little, listlessly, about the room, and grumble because I can't see to the other side of the lake.

And all these people, my serfs or menials, who are undergoing any quantity or kind of hardship I choose to put on them,—all these people, nevertheless, are more contented than I am: I can't be

* See Miss Edgeworth's Story, 'Forgive and Forget,' in the 'Parents' Assistant.'

happy, not I,—for one thing, because I haven't got the MS. Additional, (never mind what number,) in the British Museum, which they bought in 1848, for two hundred pounds, and I never saw it! And have never been easy in my mind, since.

But perhaps it is not the purpose of Heaven to make refined personages, like me, easy in our minds; we are supposed to be too grand for that. Happy, or easy, or otherwise, am I in my place, think you; and you, my serfs, in yours?

'You are not serfs,' say you, 'but free-born Britons'? Much good may your birth do you. What does your birth matter to me, since, now that you are grown men, you must do whatever I like, or die by starvation? 'Strike!'—will you? Can you live by striking? And when you are forced to work again, will not your masters choose again, as they have chosen hitherto, what work you are to do? Not serfs!—it is well if you are so much as that; a serf would know what o'clock he had to go to his work at; but I find that clocks are now no more comprehensible in England than in Italy, and *you* also have to be "whistled for like dogs," all over Yorkshire—or rather buzzed for, that being the appropriate call to business, of due honey-making kind. "Hark," says an old Athenian, according to Aristophanes, "how the nightingale has filled the thickets with honey" (meaning, with music as sweet). In Yorkshire, your steam-nightingales fill the woods with —Buzz; and for four miles round are audible,

summoning you—to your pleasure, I suppose, my free-born?

It is well, I repeat, if you are so much as serfs. A serf means a 'saved person'—the word comes first from a Greek one, meaning to drag, or drag away into safety, (though captive safety), out of the slaughter of war. But alas, the trades most of you are set to now-a-days have no element of safety in them, either for body or soul. They take thirty years from your lives here;—what they take from your lives hereafter, ask your clergy. I have no opinion on that matter.

But I used another terrible word just now—'menial.' The modern English vulgar mind has a wonderful dread of doing anything of that sort!

I suppose there is scarcely another word in the language which people more dislike having applied to them, or of which they less understand the application. It comes from a beautiful old Chaucerian word, 'meinie,' or many, signifying the attendant company of any one worth attending to; the disciples of a master, scholars of a teacher, soldiers of a leader, lords of a King. Chaucer says the God of Love came, in the garden of the Rose, with 'his many';—in the court of the King of Persia spoke a Lord, one 'of his many.' Therefore there is nothing in itself dishonourable in being menial: the only question is—*whose* many you belong to, and whether he is a person worth belonging to, or even safe to be belonged to; also, there is somewhat

in the cause of your following: if you follow for love, it is good to be menial—if for honour, good also;—if for ten per cent.—as a railroad company follows its Director, it is not good to be menial. Also there is somewhat in the manner of following: if you obey your Taskmaster's eye, it is well;—if only his whip, still, well; but not so well:—but, above all, or below all, if you have to obey the whip as a bad hound, because you have no nose, like the members of the present House of Commons, it is a very humble form of menial service indeed.

But even as to the quite literal form of it, in house or domestic service, are you sure it is so very disgraceful a state to live in?

Among the people whom one must miss out of one's life, dead, or worse than dead, by the time one is fifty-four, I can only say, for my own part, that the one I practically and truly miss most, next to father and mother, (and putting losses of imaginary good out of the question,) was a 'menial,' my father's nurse, and mine. She was one of our many—(our many being always but few), and from her girlhood to her old age, the entire ability of her life was given to serving us. She had a natural gift and specialty for doing disagreeable things; above all, the service of a sick room; so that she was never quite in her glory unless some of us were ill. She had also some parallel specialty for *saying* disagreeable things; and might be relied upon to give the extremely darkest view of any subject, before

proceeding to ameliorative action upon it. And she had a very creditable and republican aversion to doing immediately, or in set terms, as she was bid; so that when my mother and she got old together, and my mother became very imperative and particular about having her teacup set on one side of her little round table, Anne would observantly and punctiliously put it always on the other; which caused my mother to state to me, every morning after breakfast, gravely, that, if ever a woman in this world was possessed by the Devil, Anne was that woman. But in spite of these momentary and petulant aspirations to liberality and independence of character, poor Anne remained verily servile in soul all her days; and was altogether occupied from the age of fifteen to seventy-two, in doing other people's wills instead of her own, and seeking other people's good instead of her own: nor did I ever hear on any occasion of her doing harm to a human being, except by saving two hundred and some odd pounds for her relations; in consequence of which some of them, after her funeral, did not speak to the rest for several months.

Two hundred and odd pounds;—it might have been more; but I used to hear of little loans to the relations occasionally; and besides, Anne would sometimes buy a quite unjustifiably expensive silk gown. People in her station of life are always so improvident. Two hundred odd pounds at all events she had laid by, in her fifty-seven years of unselfish

labour. Actually twenty ten-pound notes. I heard the other day, to my great satisfaction, of the approaching marriage of a charming girl;—but to my dissatisfaction, that the approach was slow. "We can't marry yet"—said she;—"you know, we can't possibly marry on five hundred a year." People in that station of life are always so provident.

Two hundred odd pounds,—that was what the Third Fors, in due alliance with her sisters, thought fit to reward our Anne with, for fifty years of days' work and nights' watching; and what will not a dash of a pen win, sometimes, in the hands of superior persons! Surely the condition must be a degraded one which can do no better for itself than this!

And yet, have you ever taken a wise man's real opinion on this matter? You are not fond of hearing opinions of wise men; you like your anonymous penny-a-liners' opinions better. But do you think you could tolerantly receive that of a moderately and popularly wise man—such an one as Charles Dickens, for example? Have you ever considered seriously what *his* opinion was, about 'Dependants' and 'Menials'? He did not perhaps quite know what it was himself;—it needs wisdom of stronger make than his to be sure of what it *does* think. He would talk, in his moral passages, about Independence, and Self-dependence, and making one's way in the world, just like any hack of the *Eatanswill Independent*. But which of the people of his imagination, of his own true children, did he love and honour most? Who are your favourites

in his books—as they have been his? Menials, it strikes me, many of them. Sam, Mark, Kit, Peggotty, Mary-my-dear,—even the poor little Marchioness! I don't think Dickens intended you to look upon any of them disrespectfully. Or going one grade higher in his society, Tom Pinch, Newman Noggs, Tim Linkinwater, Oliver Twist—how independent, all of them! Very nearly menial, in soul, if they chance on a good master; none of them brilliant in fortune, nor vigorous in action. Is not the entire testimony of Dickens, traced in its true force, that no position is so *good* for men and women, none so likely to bring out their best human character, as that of a dependant, or menial? And yet with your supreme modern logic, instead of enthusiastically concluding from his works "let us all be servants," one would think the notion he put in your heads was quite the other, "let us all be masters," and that you understood his ideal of heroic English character to be given in Mr. Pecksniff or Sir Mulberry Hawk!

Alas! more's the pity you cannot all be dependants and menials, even if you were wise enough to wish it. Somebody there must be to be served, else there could be no service. And for the beatitudes and virtues of Masterhood, I must appeal to a wiser man than Dickens—but it is no use entering on that part of the question today; in the meantime, here is another letter of his, (you have had one letter already in last Fors), just come under my hand, which gives you a sketch of

a practical landlord, and true Master, on which you may meditate with advantage.

"Here, above all, we had the opportunity of seeing in what universal respect and comfort a gentleman's family may live in that country, and in far from its most favoured district; provided only they live there habitually and do their duty as the friends and guardians of those among whom Providence has appointed their proper place. Here we found neither mud hovels nor naked peasantry, but snug cottages and smiling faces all about. Here there was a very large school in the village, of which masters and pupils were, in nearly equal proportion, Protestants and Roman Catholics, the Protestant Squire himself making it a regular part of his daily business to visit the scene of their operations, and strengthen authority and enforce discipline by personal superintendence. Here, too, we pleased ourselves with recognizing some of the sweetest features in Goldsmith's picture of 'Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain;' and, in particular, we had 'the playful children just let loose from school' in perfection. Mr. Edgeworth's paternal heart delighted in letting them make a playground of his lawn; and every evening, after dinner, we saw leap-frog going on with the highest spirit within fifty yards of the drawing-room windows, while fathers and mothers, and their aged parents also, were grouped about among the trees watching the sport. It is a curious enough coincidence that Oliver Goldsmith and Maria Edgeworth should

both have derived their early love and knowledge of Irish character and manners from the same identical district. He received part of his education at this very school of Edgeworthstown; and Pallasmore (the 'locus cui nomen est Pallas' of Johnson's epitaph), the little hamlet where the author of the 'Vicar of Wakefield' first saw the light, is still, as it was in his time, the property of the Edgeworths."

"Strengthen authority," "enforce discipline!" What ugly expressions these! and a "whole hamlet," though it *be* a little one, "the property of the Edgeworths"! How long are such things yet to be? thinks my Republican correspondent, I suppose—from whom, to my regret, I have had no further dispatch since I endeavoured to answer his interrogations.* Only, note further respecting this chief question of the right of private property, that there are two kinds of ownership, which the Greeks wisely expressed in two different ways: the first, with the word which brought me to a pause in St. John's Gospel, 'idios,' signifying the way, for instance, in which a man's opinions and interests are his own, 'idia;' so that by persisting in them, independently of the truth, which is above opinion, and of the public interest, which is above private, he becomes what we very properly, borrowing the Greek word, call an 'idiot.' But their other phrase expresses the kind of belonging which is nobly

* 21st March: one just received, interesting, and to be answered next month.

won, and is truly and inviolably ours, in which sense a man may learn the full meaning of the word 'Mine' only once in his life,—happy he who has ever so learnt it. I was thinking over the prettiness of the word in that sense, a day or two ago, and opening a letter, mechanically, when a newspaper clipping dropped out of it (I don't know from what paper), containing a quotation from the *Cornhill Magazine* setting forth the present privileges of the agricultural labourer attained for him by modern improvements in machinery, in the following terms:—

"An agricultural labourer, from forty to forty-five years of age, of tried skill, of probity, and sobriety, with £200 in his pocket, is a made man. True, he has had to forego the luxury of marriage; but so have his betters."

And I think you may be grateful to the Third Fors for this clipping; which you see settles, in the region of Cornhill, at least, the question whether you are the betters or the worses of your masters. Decidedly the worses, according to the *Cornhill*. Also, exactly the sum which my old nurse had for her reward at the end of her life, is, you see, to be the agricultural labourer's reward in the crowning triumph of his;—provided always that he has followed the example of his betters on the stock exchange and in trade, in the observance of the strictest probity;—that he be entirely skilful;—not given to purchasing two shillings' worth of liquor for twenty-seven and sixpence,—

and finally, until the age of forty-five, has dispensed with the luxury of marriage.

I have just said I didn't want to make Catholics of you; but truly I think your Protestantism is becoming *too* fierce in its opposition to the Popedom. Cannot it be content with preaching the marriage of the clergy, but it must preach also the celibacy of the laity?

And the moral and anti-Byronic Mrs. B. Stowe, who so charmingly and pathetically describes the terrors of slavery, as an institution which separates men from their wives, and mothers from their children! Did she really contemplate, among the results contributed to by her interesting volumes, these ultimate privileges of Liberty,—that the men, at least under the age of forty-five, are not to have any wives to be separated from; and that the women, who under these circumstances have the misfortune to become mothers, are to feel it a hardship, not to be parted from their children, but to be prevented from accelerating the parting with a little soothing syrup?

LETTER XXIX

LA DOUCE AMIE

BRANTWOOD,
April 2, 1873.

IT is a bright morning, the first entirely clear one I have seen for months; such, indeed, as one used to see, before England was civilized into a blacksmith's shop, often enough in the sweet spring-time; and as, perhaps, our children's children may see often enough again, when their coals are burnt out, and they begin to understand that coals are not the source of all power Divine and human. In the meantime, as I say, it is months since I saw the sky, except through smoke, or the strange darkness brought by blighting wind (VIII. vol. i. p. 146), and if such weather as this is to last, I shall begin to congratulate myself, as the *Daily News* does its readers, on the "exceptionally high price of coal," indicating a most satisfactory state of things, it appears, for the general wealth of the country, for, says that well-informed journal, on March 3rd, 1873, "The net result of the exceptionally high price of coal is in substance this, that the coal owners and workers obtain an unusually large share in the distribution of the gross produce

of the community, *and the real capital of the community is increased!*"

This great and beautiful principle must of course apply to a rise in price in all other articles, as well as in coals. Accordingly, whenever you see the announcement in any shops, or by any advertising firm, that you can get something there cheaper than usual, remember, the capital of the community is being diminished; and whenever you have reason to think that anybody has charged you threepence for a twopenny article, remember that, according to the *Daily News*, "the real capital of the community is increased." And as I believe you may be generally certain, in the present state of trade, of being charged even as much as twenty-seven pence for a twopenny article, the capital of the community must be increasing very fast indeed. Holding these enlightened views on the subject of the *prices* of things, the *Daily News* cannot be expected to stoop to any consideration of their *uses*. But there is another "net result" of the high price of coal, besides the increase of the capital of the community, and a result which is more immediately your affair —namely, that a good many of you will die of cold. It may console you to reflect that a great many rich people will at least feel chilly, in economical drawing-rooms of state, and in ill-aired houses, rawly built on raw ground, and already mouldy for want of fires, though under a blackened sky.

What a pestilence of them, and unseemly plague of builders' work – as if the bricks of Egypt had

multiplied like its lice, and alighted like its locusts —has fallen on the suburbs of loathsome London!

The road from the village of Shirley, near Addington, where my father and mother are buried, to the house they lived in when I was four years old, lay, at that time, through a quite secluded district of field and wood, traversed here and there by winding lanes, and by one or two smooth mail-coach roads, beside which, at intervals of a mile or two, stood some gentleman's house, with its lawn, gardens, offices, and attached fields, indicating a country life of long continuance and quiet respectability. Except such an one here and there, one saw no dwellings above the size of cottages or small farmsteads; these, wood-built usually, and thatched, their porches embroidered with honeysuckle, and their gardens with daisies, their doors mostly ajar, or with a half one shut to keep in the children, and a bricked or tiled footway from it to the wicket gate,—all neatly kept, and vivid with a sense of the quiet energies of their contented tenants,—made the lane-turnings cheerful, and gleamed in half-hidden clusters beneath the slopes of the wood-lands at Sydenham and Penge. There were no signs of distress, of effort, or of change; many of enjoyment, and not a few of wealth beyond the daily needs of life. That same district is now covered by, literally, many thousands of houses built within the last ten years, of rotten brick, with various iron devices to hold it together. They, every one, have a drawing-room and dining-room, transparent from back to

front, so that from the road one sees the people's heads inside, clear against the light. They have a second story of bedrooms, and an underground one of kitchen. They are fastened in a Siamese-twin manner together by their sides, and each couple has a Greek or Gothic portico shared between them, with magnificent steps, and highly ornamented capitals. Attached to every double block are exactly similar double parallelograms of garden, laid out in new gravel and scanty turf, on the model of the pleasure grounds in the Crystal Palace, and enclosed by high, thin, and pale brick walls. The gardens in front are fenced from the road with an immense weight of cast iron, and entered between two square gate-posts, with projecting stucco cornices, bearing the information that the eligible residence within is Mortimer House or Montague Villa. On the other side of the road, which is laid freshly down with large flints, and is deep at the sides in ruts of yellow mud, one sees Burleigh House, or Devonshire Villa, still to let, and getting leprous in patches all over the fronts.

Think what the real state of life is, for the people who are content to pass it in such places; and what the people themselves must be. Of the men, their wives, and children, who live in any of those houses, probably not the fifth part are possessed of one common manly or womanly skill, knowledge, or means of happiness. The men can indeed write, and cast accounts, and go to town every day to get their living by doing so; the women and children

can perhaps read story-books, dance in a vulgar manner, and play on the piano with dull dexterities for exhibition; but not a member of the whole family can, in general, cook, sweep, knock in a nail, drive a stake, or spin a thread. They are still less capable of finer work. They know nothing of painting, sculpture, or architecture; of science, inaccurately, as much as may more or less account to them for Mr. Pepper's ghost, and make them disbelieve in the existence of any other ghost but that, particularly the Holy One: of books, they read *Macmillan's Magazine* on week days, and *Good Words* on Sundays, and are entirely ignorant of all the standard literature belonging to their own country, or to any other. They never think of taking a walk, and, the roads for six miles round them being ankle deep in mud and flints, they could not if they would. They cannot enjoy their gardens, for they have neither sense nor strength enough to work in them. The women and girls have no pleasures but in calling on each other in false hair, cheap dresses of gaudy stuffs, machine made, and high-heeled boots, of which the pattern was set to them by Parisian prostitutes of the lowest order: the men have no faculty beyond that of cheating in business; no pleasures but in smoking or eating; and no ideas, nor any capacity of forming ideas, of anything that has yet been done of great, or seen of good, in this world.

That is the typical condition of five-sixths, at least, of the 'rising' middle classes about London

—the lodgers in those damp shells of brick, which one cannot say they inhabit, nor call their 'houses'; nor 'their's' indeed, in any sense; but packing-cases in which they are temporarily stored, for bad use. Put the things on wheels (it is already done in America, but you must build them stronger first), and they are mere railway vans of brick, thrust in rows on the siding; vans full of monkeys that have lost the use of their legs. The baboons in Regent's Park—with Mr. Darwin's pardon—*are* of another species; a less passive, and infinitely wittier one. Here, behold, you have a group of gregarious creatures that cannot climb, and are entirely imitative, not as the apes, occasionally, for the humour of it, but all their lives long; the builders trying to build as Christians did once, though now swindling on every brick they lay; and the lodgers to live like the Duke of Devonshire, on the salaries of railroad clerks. Lodgers, do I say! Scarcely even that. Many a cottage, lodged in but for a year or two, has been made a true home, for that span of the owner's life. In my next letter but one, I hope to give you some abstract of the man's life whose testimony I want you to compare with that of Dickens, as to the positions of Master and Servant: meantime compare with what you may see of these railroad homes, this incidental notice by him of *his* first one:

"When we approached that village (Lasswade), Scott, who had laid hold of my arm, turned along the road in a direction not leading to the place

where the carriage was to meet us. After walking some minutes towards Edinburgh, I suggested that we were losing the scenery of the Esk, and, besides, had Dalkeith Palace yet to see.

"'Yes,' said he, 'and I have been bringing you where there is little enough to be seen, only that Scotch cottage (one by the roadside, with a small garth); but, though not worth looking at, I could not pass it. It was our first country house when newly married, and many a contrivance we had to make it comfortable. I made a dining-table for it with my own hands. Look at these two miserable willow trees on either side the gate into the enclosure; they are tied together at the top to be an arch, and a cross made of two sticks over them is not yet decayed. To be sure, it is not much of a lion to show a stranger; but I wanted to see it again myself, for I assure you that after I had constructed it, mamma (Mrs. Scott) and I both of us thought it so fine, we turned out to see it by moonlight, and walked backwards from it to the cottage door, in admiration of our own magnificence and its picturesque effect. I did want to see if it was still there.'"

I had scarcely looked out this passage for you, when I received a letter from the friend who sent me the penny cookery book, incidentally telling me of the breaking up of a real home. I have obtained her leave to let you read part of it. It will come with no disadvantage, even after Scott's, recording as it does the same kind of simple and natural life,

now passing so fast away. The same life, and also in the district which, henceforward, I mean to call "Sir Walter's Land"; definable as the entire breadth of Scots and English ground from sea to sea, coast and isle included, between Schehallien on the north, and Ingleborough on the south. (I have my reasons, though some readers may doubt them, for fixing the limit south of Skye, and north of Ashby-de-la-Zouche.) Within this district, then, but I shall not say in what part of it, the home my friend speaks of stood. In many respects it was like the "Fair-ladies" in "Red Gauntlet"; as near the coast, as secluded, and in the same kind of country; still more like, in its mistress's simple and loyal beneficence. Therefore, because I do not like leaving a blank for its name, I put "Fair-ladies" for it in the letter, of which the part I wish you to see begins thus:—

"Please let me say one practical thing. In no cottage is there a possibility of roasting more than a pound of meat, if any; and a piece of roast beef, such as you or I understand by the word, costs ten shillings or twelve, and is not meant for artisans. I never have it in this house now, except when it is full. I have a much sadder example of the changes wrought by modern wages and extravagance. Miss ——, who had her house and land for her home-farm expenses (or rather produce), and about —— hundred a year; who entertained for years all her women and children acquaintances; trained a dozen young servants in a year, and was

a blessing to the country for miles round; writes me word yesterday that she hopes and intreats that we will go this summer to Fair-ladies, as it is *the last*. She says the provisions are double the price they used to be—the wages also—and she cannot even work her farm as she used to do; the men want beer instead of milk, and won't do half they used to do; so she must give it up, and let the place, and come and live by me or some one to comfort her, and Fair-ladies will know her no more. I am so sorry, because I think it such a loss to the wretched people who drive her away. Our weekly bills are double what they used to be, yet every servant asks higher wages each time I engage one; and as to the poor people in the village, they are not a bit better off—they eat more, and drink more, and learn to think less of religion and all that is good. One thing I see very clearly—that, as the keeping of Sunday is being swept away, so is their day of *rest* going with it. Of course, if no one goes to worship God one day more than another,* what is the sense of talking about the Sabbath? If all the railway servants, and all the post-office, and all the museum and art-collection servants, and all the refreshment places, and other sorts of amusement, servants are to work on Sunday, why on earth should not the artisans, who are as selfish and

* My dear friend, I can't bear to interrupt your pretty letter; but, indeed, one should *not* worship God on one day more, or *less*, than on another; and one should rest when one needs rest, whether on Sunday or Saturday.

irreligious as any one? No! directly I find every one else is at work, I shall insist on the baker and the butcher calling for orders as usual. (Quite right, my dear.) The result of enormous wages will be that I rely more on my own boys for carpentering, and on preserved food, and the cook and butcher will soon be dismissed."

My poor little darling, rely on your own boys for carpentering by all means; and grease be to their elbows—but you shall have something better to rely on than potted crocodile, in old England, yet, —please the pixies, and pigs, and St. George, and St. Anthony.

Nay, we will have also a blue-aproned butcher or two still, to call for orders; they are not yet extinct. We have not even reached the preparatory phase of steam-butcher-boys, riding from Buxton for orders to Bakewell, and from Bakewell for orders to Buxton; and paying dividends to a Steam-Butcher's-boy-Company. Not extinct yet, and a kindly race, for the most part. "He told me," (part of another friend's letter, speaking of his butcher,) "his sow had fourteen pigs, and could only rear twelve, the other two, he said, he was feeding with a spoon. I never could bear, he said, to kill a young animal because he was one too many." Yes; that is all very well when it's a pig; but if it be—Wait a minute;—I must go back to Fair-ladies, before I finish my sentence.

For note very closely what the actual facts are in this short letter from an English housewife.

She in the south, and the mistress of Fair-ladies

in the north, both find "their weekly bills double what they used to be"; that is to say, they are as poor again as they were, and they have to pay higher wages, of course, for now all wages buy so much less. I have too long, perhaps, put questions to you which I knew you could not answer, partly in the hope of at least making you think, and partly because I knew you would not believe the true answer, if I gave it. But, whether you believe me or not, I must explain the meaning of this to you at once. The weekly bills are double, because the greater part of the labour of the people of England is spent unproductively; that is to say, in producing iron plates, iron guns, gunpowder, infernal machines, infernal fortresses floating about, infernal fortresses standing still, infernal means of mischievous locomotion, infernal lawsuits, infernal parliamentry elocution, infernal beer, and infernal gazettes, magazines, statues, and pictures. Calculate the labour spent in producing these infernal articles annually, and put against it the labour spent in producing food! The only wonder is, that the weekly bills are not tenfold instead of double. For this poor housewife, mind you, cannot feed her children with any one, or any quantity, of these infernal articles. Children can only be fed with divine articles. Their mother can indeed get to London cheap, but she has no business there; she can buy all the morning's news for a half-penny, but she has no concern with them; she can see Gustave Doré's pictures (and she had better see the devil,)

for a shilling; she can be carried through any quantity of filthy streets on a tramway for threepence; but it is as much as her life's worth to walk in them, or as her modesty's worth to look into a print shop in them. Nay, let her have but to go on foot a quarter of a mile in the West End, she dares not take her purse in her pocket, nor let her little dog follow her. These are her privileges and facilities, in the capital of civilization. But none of these will bring meat or flour into her own village. Far the contrary! The sheep and corn which the fields of her village produce are carried away from it to feed the makers of Armstrong guns. And her weekly bills are double.

But you, forsooth, you think, with your beer for milk, are better off. Read pages 30 to 32 of my second letter, Vol. I., over again. And now observe farther: –

The one first and absolute question of all economy is—What are you making? Are you making Hell's articles, or Heaven's? gunpowder, or corn?

There is no question whether you are to have work or not. The question is, *what* work. This poor housewife's mutton and corn are given you to eat. Good. Now, if you, with your day's work, produce for her, and send to her, spices, or tea, or rice, or maize, or figs, or any other good thing,—*that* is true and beneficent trade. But if you take her mutton and corn from her, and send her back an Armstrong gun, what can she make of that? But you can't grow figs and spices in England, you

say? No, certainly, and therefore means of transit for produce in England are little necessary. Let my poor housewife keep her sheep in her near fields, and do you—keep sheep at Newcastle—and the weekly bills will not rise. But you forge iron at Newcastle; then you build an embankment from Newcastle to my friend's village, whereupon you take her sheep from her, suffocating half of them on the way; and you send her an Armstrong gun back; or, perhaps not even to her, but to somebody who can fire it down your own throats, you jolterheads.

No matter, you say, in the meantime, we eat more, and drink more; the housewife herself allows that. Yes, I have just told you, her corn and sheep all are sent to you. But how about other people? I will finish my sentence now, paused in above. It is all very well to bring up creatures with a spoon, when they are one or two too many, if they are useful things like pigs. But how if they be useless things like young ladies? You don't want any wives, I understand, now, till you are forty-five; what in the world will you do with your girls? Bring them up with a spoon, to that enchanting age?

"The girls may shift for themselves." Yes,—they may, certainly. Here is a picture of some of them, as given by the *Telegraph* of March 18th of the present year, under Lord Derby's new code of civilization, endeavouring to fulfil Mr. John Stuart Mill's wishes, and procure some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby:—

"After all the discussion about woman's sphere and woman's rights, and the advisability of doing something to redress the inequality of position against which the fair sex, by the medium of many champions, so loudly protests and so constantly struggles, it is not satisfactory to be told what happened at Cannon-row two days last week. It had been announced that the Civil Service Commissioners would receive applications personally from candidates for eleven vacancies in the metropolitan post-offices, and in answer to this notice, about 2,000 young women made their appearance. The building, the courtyard, and the street were blocked by a dense throng of fair applicants; locomotion was impossible, even with the help of policemen; windows were thrown up to view the sight, as if a procession had been passing that way; traffic was obstructed, and nothing could be done for hours. We understand, indeed, that the published accounts by no means do justice to the scene. Many of the applicants, it appears, were girls of the highest respectability and of unusually good social position, including daughters of clergymen and professional men, well connected, well educated, tenderly nurtured; but nevertheless, driven by the *res angustæ* which have caused many a heart-break, and scattered the members of many a home, to seek for the means of independent support. The crowd, the agitation, the anxiety, the fatigue, proved too much for many of those who attended; several fainted away; others went

into violent hysterics; others, despairing of success, remained just long enough to be utterly worn out, and then crept off, showing such traces of mental anguish as we are accustomed to associate with the most painful bereavements. In the present case, it is stated, the Commissioners examined over 1,000 candidates for the eleven vacancies. This seems a sad waste of power on both sides, when, in all probability, the first score supplied the requisite number of qualified aspirants."

Yes, my pets, I am tired of talking to these workmen, who never answer a word; I will try *you* now —for a letter or two -but I beg your pardon for calling you pets,—my "qualified aspirants" I mean (Alas! time was when the qualified aspiration was on the bachelor's side). Here you have got all you want, I hope!—liberty enough, it seems—if only the courtyard were bigger; equality enough —no distinction made between young ladies of the highest, or the lowest, respectability; rights of women generally claimed, you perceive; and obtained without opposition from absurdly religious, moral, or chivalric persons. You have got no God, now, to bid you do anything you don't like; no husbands, to insist on having their own way— (and much of it they got, in the old times—didn't they?)—no pain nor peril of childbirth;—no bringing up of tiresome brats. Here is an entirely scientific occupation for you! Such a beautiful invention this of Mr. Wheatstone's! and I hope you all understand the relations of positive and

negative electricity. Now you may "communicate intelligence" by telegraph. Those wretched girls that used to write love-letters, of which their foolish lovers would count the words, and sometimes be thankful for—less than twenty—how they would envy you if they knew. Only the worst is, that this beautiful invention of Mr. Wheatstone's for talking miles off, won't feed people in the long run, my dears, any more than the old invention of the tongue, for talking near, and you'll soon begin to think that was not so bad a one, after all. But you can't live by talking, though you talk in the scientificalest of manners, and to the other side of the world. All the telegraph wire over the earth and under the sea, will not do so much for you, my poor little qualified aspirants, as one strong needle with thimble and thread.

You *do* sometimes read a novel still, don't you, my scientific dears? I wish I could write one; but I can't; and George Eliot always makes them end so wretchedly that they're worse than none —so she's no good, neither. I must even translate a foreign novelette or nouvelette, which is to my purpose, next month; meantime I have chanced on a little true story, in the journal of an Englishman, travelling, before the Revolution, in France, which shows you something of the temper of the poor unscientific girls of that day. Here are first, however, a little picture or two which he gives in the streets of Paris, and which I want all my readers to see; they mark, what most Englishmen

do not know, that the beginning of the French Revolution, with what of good or evil it had, was in English, not French, notions of "justice" and "liberty." The writer is travelling with a friend, Mr. B——, who is of the Liberal school, and, "He and I went this forenoon to a review of the foot-guards, by Marshal Biron. There was a crowd, and we could with difficulty get within the circle, so as to see conveniently. An old officer of high rank touched some people who stood before us, saying, 'Ces deux Messieurs sont des étrangers;' upon which they immediately made way, and allowed us to pass. 'Don't you think that was very obliging?' said I. 'Yes,' answered he; 'but by heavens, it was very unjust.'

"We returned by the Boulevards, where crowds of citizens, in their holiday dresses, were making merry; the young dancing cotillons, the old beating time to the music, and applauding the dancers. 'These people seem very happy,' said I. 'Happy!' exclaimed B——; 'if they had common sense, or reflection, they would be miserable.' 'Why so?' 'Could not the minister,' answered he, 'pick out half-a-dozen of them if he pleased, and clap them into the Bicêtre?' 'That is true, indeed,' said I; 'that is a catastrophe which, to be sure, may very probably happen, and yet I thought no more of it than they.'

"We met, a few days after he arrived, at a French house where we had been both invited to dinner. There was an old lady of quality present,

next to whom a young officer was seated, who paid her the utmost attention. He helped her to the dishes she liked, filled her glass with wine or water, and addressed his discourse particularly to her. 'What a fool,' says B——, 'does that young fellow make of the poor old woman! if she were my mother, d—n me, if I would not call him to an account for it.'

"Though B—— understands French, and speaks it better than most Englishmen, he had no relish for the conversation, soon left the company, and has refused all invitations to dinner ever since. He generally finds some of our countrymen, who dine and pass the evening with him at the Parc Royal.

"After the review this day, we continued together, and being both disengaged, I proposed, by way of variety, to dine at the public ordinary of the Hôtel de Bourbon. He did not like this much at first. 'I shall be teased,' says he, 'with their confounded ceremony;' but on my observing that we could not expect much ceremony or politeness at a public ordinary, he agreed to go.

"Our entertainment turned out different, however, from my expectations and his wishes. A marked attention was paid us the moment we entered; everybody seemed inclined to accommodate us with the best places. They helped us first, and all the company seemed ready to sacrifice every convenience and distinction to the strangers; for, next to that of a lady, the most respected character at Paris is that of a stranger.

"After dinner, B—— and I walked into the gardens of the Palais Royal.

"'There was nothing real in all the fuss those people made about us,' says he.

"'I can't help thinking it something,' said I, 'to be treated with civility and apparent kindness in a foreign country, by strangers who know nothing about us, but that we are Englishmen, and often their enemies.'"

So much for the behaviour of old Paris. Now for our country story. I will not translate the small bits of French in it; my most entirely English readers can easily find out what they mean, and they must gather what moral they may from it, till next month, for I have no space to comment on it in this letter.

"My friend F—— called on me a few days since, and as soon as he understood that I had no particular engagement, he insisted that I should drive somewhere into the country, dine *tête-à-tête* with him, and return in time for the play.

"When we had driven a few miles, I perceived a genteel-looking young fellow, dressed in an old uniform. He sat under a tree on the grass, at a little distance from the road, and amused himself by playing on the violin. As we came nearer we perceived he had a wooden leg, part of which lay in fragments by his side.

"'What do you do there, soldier?' said the Marquis. 'I am on my way home to my own village, mon officier,' said the soldier. 'But, my

poor friend,' resumed the Marquis, 'you will be a furious long time before you arrive at your journey's end, if you have no other carriage besides these,' pointing at the fragments of his wooden leg. 'I wait for my equipage and all my suite,' said the soldier, 'and I am greatly mistaken if I do not see them this moment coming down the hill.'

"We saw a kind of cart, drawn by one horse, in which was a woman, and a peasant who drove the horse. While they drew near, the soldier told us he had been wounded in Corsica—that his leg had been cut off—that before setting out on that expedition, he had been contracted to a young woman in the neighbourhood—that the marriage had been postponed till his return;—but when he appeared with a wooden leg, that all the girl's relations had opposed the match. The girl's mother, who was her only surviving parent when he began his courtship, had always been his friend; but she had died while he was abroad. The young woman herself, however, remained constant in her affections, received him with open arms, and had agreed to leave her relations, and accompany him to Paris, from whence they intended to set out in the diligence to the town where he was born, and where his father still lived. That on the way to Paris his wooden leg had snapped, which had obliged his mistress to leave him, and go to the next village in quest of a cart to carry him thither, where he would remain till such time as the carpenter should renew his leg. 'C'est un malheur,' concluded the

soldier, 'mon officier, bientôt reparé—et voici mon amie!'

"The girl sprung before the cart, seized the outstretched hand of her lover, and told him, with a smile full of affection, that she had seen an admirable carpenter, who had promised to make a leg that would not break, that it would be ready by to-morrow, and they might resume their journey as soon after as they pleased.

"The soldier received his mistress's compliment as it deserved.

"She seemed about twenty years of age, a beautiful, fine-shaped girl—a brunette, whose countenance indicated sentiment and vivacity.

"'You must be much fatigued, my dear,' said the Marquis. 'On ne se fatigue pas, Monsieur, quand on travaille pour ce qu'on aime,' replied the girl. The soldier kissed her hand with a gallant and tender air. 'Allons,' continued the Marquis, addressing himself to me; 'this girl is quite charming—her lover has the appearance of a brave fellow; they have but three legs betwixt them, and we have four;—if you have no objection, they shall have the carriage, and we will follow on foot to the next village, and see what can be done for these lovers.' I never agreed to a proposal with more pleasure in my life.

"The soldier began to make difficulties about entering into the *vis-à-vis*. 'Come, come, friend,' said the Marquis, 'I am a colonel, and it is your duty to obey: get in without more ado, and your mistress shall follow.'

"'Entrons, mon bon ami,' said the girl, 'since these gentlemen insist upon doing us so much honour.'

"'A girl like you would do honour to the finest coach in France. Nothing could please me more than to have it in my power to make you happy,' said the Marquis. 'Laissez-moi faire, mon colonel,' said the soldier. 'Je suis heureuse comme une reine,' said Fanchon. Away moved the chaise, and the Marquis and I followed.

"'Voyez-vous, combien nous sommes heureux, nous autres François, à bon marché,' said the Marquis to me, adding with a smile, 'le bonheur, à ce qu'on m'a dit, est plus cher en Angleterre.' 'But,' answered I, 'how long will this last with these poor people?' 'Ah, pour le coup,' said he, 'voilà une réflexion bien Angloise;—that, indeed, is what I cannot tell; neither do I know how long you or I may live; but I fancy it would be great folly to be sorrowful through life, because we do not know how soon misfortunes may come, and because we are quite certain that death is to come at last.'

"When we arrived at the inn to which we had ordered the postillion to drive, we found the soldier and Fanchon. After having ordered some victuals and wine, 'Pray,' said I to the soldier, 'how do you propose to maintain your wife and yourself?' 'One who has contrived to live for five years on soldier's pay,' replied he, 'can have little difficulty for the rest of his life. I can play tolerably well

on the fiddle,' added he, 'and perhaps there is not a village in all France of the size, where there are so many marriages as in that in which we are going to settle; I shall never want employment.' 'And I,' said Fanchon, 'can weave hair nets and silk purses, and mend stockings. Besides, my uncle has two hundred livres of mine in his hands, and although he is brother-in-law to the bailiff, and volontiers brutal, yet I will make him pay it every sous.' 'And I,' said the soldier, 'have fifteen livres in my pocket, besides two louis that I have lent to a poor farmer to enable him to pay taxes, and which he will repay me when he is able.'

"'You see, Sir,' said Fanchon to me, 'that we are not objects of compassion. May we not be happy, my good friend (turning to her lover with a look of exquisite tenderness), if it be not our own fault?' 'If you are not, ma douce amie!' said the soldier with great warmth, 'je serai bien à plaindre.'"

A letter of great interest has lain by me since Christmas, though the writer would know I had received it by my instant use of the book he told me of,—Professor Kirk's. With reference to the statements therein made respecting the robbing of the poor by the rich, through temptation of drink, the letter goes on:—

"But to my mind the enquiry does not reach deep enough. I would know, first, why it is that the workers have so little control over their appetites in this direction? (*a*) and what the remedy? secondly, why is it that

those who wish to drain the working men are permitted to govern them? (*b*) and what the remedy? (*c*)

"The answers to each question will, I think, be found to be nearly related.

"The possibility of a watchful and exacting, yet respected, government within a government, is well shown by the existence and discipline of the Society of Friends, of which I am a member. Our society is, no doubt, greatly injured by narrow views of religious truth; yet may it not be that their change from an agricultural to a trading people has done the most to sap the vital strength of their early days? But the tree is not without good fruit yet. A day or two ago the following sentence was extracted by me from a newspaper notice of the death of Robert Charleton, of Bristol:—

"'In him the poor and needy, the oppressed, the fallen and friendless, and the lonely sufferer, ever had a tender and faithful friend. When in trade, he was one of the best employers England could boast. He lived for his people, rather than expected them to live for him: and when he did not derive one penny profit from his factory, but rather lost by it, he still kept the business going, for the sake of his workpeople'" (*d*).

The answers to my correspondent's questions are very simple. (*a*) The workers have in general much more control over their appetites than idle people. But as they are for the most part hindered by their occupation from all rational, and from the best domestic, pleasures, and as manual work naturally makes people thirsty, what can they do but drink? Intoxication is the only Heaven that, practically, Christian England ever displays to them. But see my statements on

this point in the fourth lecture in the 'Crown of Wild Olive,' when I get it out; (the unfinished notes on Frederick keeping it back a while). (*b*) Because, as the working men have been for the last fifty years taught that one man is as good as another, they never think of looking for a good man to govern them; and only those who intend to pillage or cheat them will ever come forward of their own accord to govern them; or can succeed in doing so, because as long as they trust in their own sagacity, any knave can humbug them to the top of his bent; while no wise man can teach them anything whatever, contrary to their immediate notions. And the distrust in themselves, which would make them look for a real leader, and believe him, is the last sensation likely to occur to them at present; (see my republican correspondent's observations on election, in the next letter.) (*c*) My correspondent twice asks what is the remedy? I believe none, now, but the natural one;—namely, some of the forms of ruin which necessarily cut a nation of blockheads down to the ground, and leave it, thence to sprout again, if there be any life left for it in the earth, or lesson teachable to it by adversity. But, through whatever catastrophes, for any man who cares for the right and sees it, his own duty in the wreck is always clear—to keep himself cool and fearless, and do what is instantly serviceable to the people nearest him, and the best he can, silently, for all. Cotton in one's ears may be necessary—for we are like soon to have screaming enough in England, as in the wreck of the Northfleet, if that would do any good. (*d*) Yes, that is all very fine; but suppose that keeping useless work going on, for the sake of the workpeople, be not the wisest thing to do for the sake of *other* people? Of

this hereafter. The sentence respecting the corrupting power of trade, as opposed to agriculture, is certainly right, and very notable.

Perhaps some of my readers may be surprised at my giving space to the following comments of my inquisitive Republican acquaintance on my endeavours to answer his questions. But they are so characteristic of the genius of Republicanism, that I esteem them quite one of the best gifts of the Third 'Fors' to us: also, the writer is sincere, and might think, if I did not print his answers, that I treated him unfairly. I may afterwards take note of some points in them, but have no time this month.

"We are all covetous. I am ravenously covetous of the means to speak in such type and on such paper as you can buy the use of. 'Oh that mine enemy would' give me the means of employing such a printer as you can employ!" (Certainly, he could do nothing worse for you!)

"I find you have published my questions, and your criticism thereon. I thank you for your 'good-will to man,' but protest against the levity of your method of dealing with politics.

"You assume that you understand me, and that I don't understand myself or you. I fully admit that I don't understand you or myself, and I declare that neither do you understand me. But I will pass hyper-criticism (and, by-the-by, I am not sure that I know what that compound word means; you will know, of course, for me) and tackle your 'Answers.'

"1. You evade the meaning—the question,—for I cannot think you *mean* that the 'world,' or an 'ocean,'

can be rightfully regarded by legislators as the private property of 'individuals.'

"2. 'It never was, and never can be.' The price of a cocoanut was the cost of labour in climbing the tree; the climber ate the nut.

"3. What do *you* understand by a 'tax'? The penny paid for the conveyance of a letter is not a tax. Lord Somebody says I must perish of hunger, or pay him for permission to dig in the land on which I was born. He taxes me that he may live without labouring, and do you say 'of course,' 'quite rightfully'?

"4.?

"5. You may choose a pig or horse for yourself, but I claim the right of choosing mine, even though you know that you could choose better animals for me. By your system, if logically carried out, we should have no elections, but should have an emperor of the world,—the man who knew himself to be the most intelligent of all. I suppose *you* should be allowed to vote? It is somebody else who must have no political voice? Where do you draw the line? Just below John Ruskin?* Is a man so little and his polish so much? Men and women must vote, or must not submit. I have bought but little of the polish sold at schools; but, ignorant as I am, I would not yield as the 'subject' of thirty million Ruskins, or of the king they might elect without consulting me. You did not let either your brain or your heart speak when you answered that question.

"6. 'Beneficial.' I claim the right of personal

* My correspondent will perhaps be surprised to hear that I have never in my life voted for any candidate for Parliament, and that I never mean to.

judgment, and I would grant the exercise of that right to every man and woman.

"7. 'Untrue.' *Untrue.* Lord Somebody consumes, with the aid of a hundred men and women, whom he keeps from productive industry, as much as would suffice to maintain a hundred families. A hundred —yes, a thousand navvies. 'Destroying'? Did you forget that so many admirals, generals, colonels, and captains, were your law-makers? Are they not professional destroyers? I could fill your pages with a list of other destructive employments of your legislators.

"8. Has the tax gatherer too busy a time of it to attend to the duties added by the establishment of a National Post Office? We remove a thousand toll-bars, and collect the assessment annually with economy. We eat now, and are poisoned, and pay dearly. The buyers and sellers of bread 'have a busy time of it.'

"9. Thank you for the straightforwardness. But I find you ask me what I mean by a 'State.' I meant it as you accepted it, and did not think it economical to bother you or myself with a page of incomplete definitions.

"10. 'See *Munera Pulveris!*' And ye 'workmen and labourers,' go and consult the Emperor of China.

"You speak of a king who killed 'without wrath, and without doubting his rightness,' and of a collier who killed with 'consciousness.' Glorious, ignorant brute of a king! Degraded, enlightened collier! It is enough to stimulate a patriot to burn all the colleges and libraries. Much learning makes us ignoble! No! it is the much labour and the bad teaching of the labourer by those who never earned their food by the sweat of their own brow."

LETTER XXX

THE CART THAT WENT OF ITSELF

BRANTWOOD,
April 19, 1873.

ON the thirteenth shelf of the south bookcase of my home-library, stand, first, Kenelm Digby's 'Broad Stone of Honour,' then in five volumes, bound in red, the 'History of the Ingenious Gentleman, Don Quixote of La Mancha;' and then, in one volume, bound in green, a story no less pathetic, called the 'Mirror of Peasants.'

Its author does not mean the word 'mirror' to be understood in the sense in which one would call Don Quixote the 'Mirror of Chivalry;' but in that of a glass in which a man—beholding his natural heart—may know also the hearts of other men, as, in a glass, face answers to face.

The author of this story was a clergyman; but employed the greater part of his day in writing novels, having a gift for that species of composition as well as for sermons, and observing, though he gave both excellent in their kind, that his congregation liked their sermons to be short, and his readers, their novels to be long.

Among them, however, were also many tiny

novelettes, of which, young ladies, I to-day begin translating for you one of the shortest; hoping that you will not think the worse of it for being written by a clergyman. Of this author I will only say, that, though I am not prejudiced in favour of persons of his profession, I think him the wisest man, take him all in all, with whose writings I am acquainted; chiefly because he showed his wisdom in pleasant and unappalling ways; as, for instance, by keeping, for the chief ornament of his study (not being able to afford expensive books), one book beautifully bound, and shining with magnificence of golden embossing; this book of books being his register, out of which he read, from the height of his pulpit, the promises of marriage. "Dans lequel il lisait, du haut de la chaire, les promesses de mariage."

He rose always early; breakfasted himself at six o'clock; and then got ready with his own hands the family breakfast, liking his servants better to be at work out of doors: wrote till eleven, dined at twelve, and spent the afternoon in his parish work, or in his fields, being a farmer of shrewdest and most practical skill; and through the Sundays of fifteen years, never once was absent from his pulpit.

And now, before I begin my little story, which is a translation of a translation, for the original is German, and I can only read French, I must say a few serious words as to the sense in which I wish you to receive what religious instruction this

romantic clergyman may sometimes mingle with his romance. He is an Evangelical divine of the purest type. It is therefore primarily for my Evangelical readers that I translate this or others of his tales; and if they have read either former letters of 'Fors,' or any of my later books, they must know that I do not myself believe in Evangelical theology. But I shall, with my best care, represent and enforce this clergyman's teaching to my said Evangelical readers, exactly as I should feel it my duty, if I were talking to a faithful Turk, to represent and enforce to him any passage of the Koran which was beyond all question true, in its reference to practical light; and with the bearings of which I was more familiar than he. For I think that our common prayer that God "would take away all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of His word, from all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics," is an entirely absurd one. I do not think all Jews have hard hearts; nor that all infidels would despise God's word, if only they could hear it; nor do I in the least know whether it is my neighbour or myself who is really the heretic. But I pray that prayer for myself as well as others; and in this form, that God would make all Jews honest Jews, all Turks honest Turks, all infidels honest infidels, and all Evangelicals and heretics honest Evangelicals and heretics; that so these Israelites in whom there is no guile, Turks in whom there is no guile, and so on, may in due time see the face, and know the power, of the King

alike of Israel and Esau. Now, therefore, young ladies, I beg you to understand that I entirely sympathize with this Evangelical clergyman's feelings because I know him to be honest: also, that I give you of his teaching what is universally true: and that you may get the more good from his story, I will ask you first to consider with yourselves what St. James means by saying in the ninth verse of his general Epistle, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low;" and if you find, as you generally will, if you think seriously over any verse of your Bibles whatsoever, that you never have had, and are never likely to have, the slightest idea what it means, perhaps you will permit me to propose the following explanation to you. That while both rich and poor are to be content to remain in their several states, gaining only by the due and natural bettering of an honest man's settled life; if, nevertheless, any chance should occur to cause sudden difference in either of their positions, the poor man might wisely desire that it should be some relief from the immediate pressure of poverty, while the rich should esteem it the surest sign of God's favour, if, without fault of his own, he were forced to know the pain of a lower condition.

I have noticed, in 'Sesame and Lilies,' § 2, the frantic fear of the ordinary British public, lest they should fall below their proper "station in life." It appears that almost the only real sense of duty remaining now in the British conscience is a

passionate belief in the propriety of keeping up an appearance; no matter if on other people's money, so only that there be no signs of their coming down in the world.

I should be very glad therefore if any of my young lady readers, who consider themselves religious persons, would inform me whether they are satisfied with my interpretation of the text; and if so, then how far they would consent, without complaining, to let God humble them, if He wished to? If, for instance, they would, without pouting, allow Him to have His way, even to the point of forcing them to gain their bread by some menial service,—as, suppose, a housemaid's; and whether they would feel aggrieved at being made lower housemaid instead of upper. If they have read their Bible to so good purpose as not to care which, I hope the following story may not be thought wholly beneath their attention; concerning, as it does, the housemaid's principal implement; or what (supposing her a member of St. George's Company) we may properly call her spear, or weapon of noble war.

THE BROOM MERCHANT

Brooms are, as we know, among the imperious necessities of the epoch; and in every household, there are many needful articles of the kind which must be provided from day to day, or week to week; and which one accordingly finds, everywhere,

persons glad to supply. But we pay daily less and less attention to these kindly disposed persons, since we have been able to get the articles at their lowest possible price.

Formerly it was not thus. The broom merchant, the egg merchant, the sand and rottenstone merchant, were, so to speak, part of the family; one was connected with them by very close links; one knew the day on which each would arrive; and according to the degree of favour they were in, one kept something nice for their dinner; and if, by any chance, they did not come to their day, they excused themselves, next time, as for a very grave fault indeed. They considered the houses which they supplied regularly, as the stars of their heaven,—took all the pains in the world to serve them well,—and, on quitting their trade for anything more dignified, did all they could to be replaced either by their children, or by some cousin, or cousine. There was thus a reciprocal bond of fidelity on one side, and of trust on the other, which unhappily relaxes itself more and more every day, in the measure that also family spirit disappears.

The broom merchant of Rychiswyl was a servant of this sort; he whom one regrets now, so often at Berne,—whom everybody was so fond of at Thun! The Saturday might sooner have been left out of the almanack, than the broom-man not appear in Thun on the Saturday. He had not always been the broom-man; for a long time he had only been the broom-boy; until, in the end, the boy had boys

of his own, who put themselves to push his cart for him. His father, who had been a soldier, died early in life; the lad was then very young, and his mother ailing. His elder sister has started in life many a day before, barefoot, and had found a place in helping a woman who carried pine-cones and turpentine to Berne. When she had won her spurs, that is to say, shoes and stockings, she obtained advancement, and became a governess of poultry, in a large farm near the town. Her mother and brother were greatly proud of her, and never spoke but with respect of their pretty Babeli. Hansli could not leave his mother, who had need of his help, to fetch her wood, and the like. They lived on the love of God and good people; but badly enough. One day, the farmer they lodged with says to Hansli:

My lad, it seems to me you might try and earn something now; you are big enough, and sharp enough.

I wish I could, said Hansli; but I don't know how.

I know something you could do, said the farmer. Set to work to make brooms; there are plenty of twigs on my willows. I only get them stolen as it is; so they shall not cost you much. You shall make me two brooms a year of them.*

Yes, that would be very fine and good, said Hansli; but where shall I learn to make brooms?

* Far wiser than letting him gather them as valueless.

Pardieu,* there's no such sorcery in the matter, said the farmer. I'll take on me the teaching of you; many a year now I've made all the brooms we use on the farm myself, and I'll back myself to make as good as are made;† you'll want few tools, and may use mine at first.

All which was accordingly done; and God's blessing came on the doing of it. Hansli took a fancy to the work; and the farmer was enchanted with Hansli.

Don't look so close;‡ put all in that is needful, do the thing well, so as to show people they may put confidence in you. Once get their trust, and your business is done, said always the farmer,§ and Hansli obeyed him.

In the beginning, naturally, things did not go very fast, nevertheless he placed‖ what he could make; and as he became quicker in the making, the sale increased in proportion. Soon, everybody said that no one had such pretty brooms as the little merchant of Rychiswyl; and the better he succeeded, the harder he worked. His mother visibly recovered liking for life. Now the battle's

* Not translateable. In French, it has the form of a passionate oath, but the spirit of a gentle one.

† Head of house doing all he can do *well*, himself. If he had not had time to make the brooms well, he would have bought them.

‡ Do not calculate so closely how much you can afford to give for the price.

§ Not meaning "you can cheat them afterwards," but that the customer would not leave him for another broom-maker.

‖ Sold.

won, said she; as soon as one can gain one's bread honourably, one has the right to enjoy oneself, and what can one want more! Always, from that time, she had, every day, as much as she liked to eat; nay, even every day there remained something over for the next: and she could have as much bread as she liked. Indeed, Hansli very often brought her even a little white bread back from the town, whereupon * how happy did she not feel herself! and how she thanked God for having kept so many good things for her old days.

On the contrary, now for a little while, Hansli was looking cross and provoked. Soon he began actually to grumble. 'Things could not go on much longer that way; he could not put up with it.' When the farmer at last set himself to find out what that meant, Hansli declared to him that he had too many brooms to carry, and could not carry them; and that even when the miller took them on his cart, it was very inconvenient, and that he absolutely wanted a cart of his own, but he hadn't any money to buy one, and didn't know anybody who was likely to lend him any. You are a gaby,† said the peasant. Look you, I won't have you become one of those people who think a thing's

* "Aussi," *also* how happy she felt. Aussi is untranslateable in this pretty use; so hereafter I shall put it, as an English word, in its place.

† "Nigaud," good for nothing but trifles; worthless, but without sense of vice; (vaut-rien, means viciously worthless). The real sense of this word here would be "Handless fool," but said good-humouredly.

done as soon as they've dreamt it. That's the way one spends one's money to make the fish go into other people's nets. You want to buy a cart, do you? why don't you make one yourself?

Hansli put himself* to stare at the farmer with his mouth open, and great eyes.

Yes, make it yourself: you will manage it, if you make up your mind, went on the farmer. You can chip wood well enough, and the wood won't cost you much—what I haven't, another peasant will have; and there must be old iron about, plenty, in the lumber-room. I believe there's even an old cart somewhere, which you can have to look at—or to use, if you like. Winter will be here soon; set yourself to work, and by the spring all will be done, and you won't have spent a threepenny piece,† for you may pay the smith too, with brooms, or find a way of doing without him—who knows?

Hansli began to open his eyes again. I make a cart,—but how ever shall I,—I never made one. Gaby, answered the farmer, one must make everything once the first time. Take courage, and it's half done. If people took courage solidly, there are many now carrying the beggar's wallet, who would have money up to their ears, and good metal, too. Hansli was on the point of asking if the peasant had lost his head. Nevertheless, he finished

* Se mit à regarder. I shall always translate such passages with the literal idiom—put himself.

† A single batz, about three halfpence in bad silver, flat struck: I shall use the word without translating henceforward.

by biting at the notion; and entering into it little by little, as a child into cold water. The peasant came now and then to help him; and in spring the new cart was ready, in such sort that on Easter Tuesday Hansli conducted it,* for the first time, to Berne, and the following Saturday to Thun, also for the first time. The joy and pride that this new cart gave him, it is difficult to form anything like a notion of. If anybody had proposed to give him the Easter ox for it, that they had promenaded at Berne the evening before, and which weighed well its twenty-five quintals, he wouldn't have heard of such a thing. It seemed to him that everybody stopped as they passed, to look at his cart; and, whenever he got a chance, he put himself to explain at length what advantages that cart had over every other cart that had yet been seen in the world. He asserted very gravely that it went of itself, except only at the hills; where it was necessary to give it a touch of the hand.† A cook-maid said to him that she would not have thought him so clever; and that if ever she wanted a cart, she would give him her custom. That cook-maid, always, afterwards, when she bought a fresh supply of brooms, had a present of two little ones into the bargain, to sweep

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* Pushed it. No horse wanted.

† Coup de main, a nice French idiom meaning the stroke of hand as opposed by that of a senseless instrument. The phrase "Taking a place by a coup de main" regards essentially not so much the mere difference between sudden and long assault, as between assault with flesh or cannon.

into the corners of the hearth with; things which are very convenient for maids who like to have everything clean even into the corners; and who always wash their cheeks to behind their ears. It is true that maids of this sort are thin-sprinkled enough.*

From this moment, Hansli began to take good heart to his work: his cart was for him his farm;† he worked with real joy; and joy in getting anything done is, compared to ill-humour, what a sharp hatchet is to a rusty one, in cutting wood. The farmers of Rychiswyl were delighted with the boy. There wasn't one of them who didn't say, 'When you want twigs, you've only to take them in my field; but don't damage the trees, and think of the wife sometimes; women use so many brooms in a year that the devil couldn't serve them.' Hansli did not fail; also was he in great favour with all the farm-mistresses. They never had been in the way of setting any money aside for buying brooms; they ordered their husbands to provide them,‡ but one knows how things go, that way. Men are often too lazy to make shavings,§ how

* Assez clair semées.

† He is now a capitalist, in the entirely wholesome and proper sense of the word.

‡ See above, the first speech of the farmer to Hansli, "Many's the year now," etc. It would be a shame for a well-to-do farmer to have to buy brooms; it is only the wretched townspeople whom Hansli counts on for custom.

§ Copeaux, I don't understand this.

much less brooms!—aussi the women were often in a perfect famine of brooms, and the peace of the household had greatly to suffer for it. But now, Hansli was there before one had time to think; and it was very seldom a paysanne * was obliged to say to him, 'Hansli, don't forget us, we're at our last broom.' Besides the convenience of this, Hansli's brooms were superb—very different from the wretched things which one's grumbling husband tied up loose, or as rough and ragged as if they had been made of oat straw. Of course, in these houses, Hansli gave his brooms for nothing; yet they were not the worst placed pieces of his stock; for, not to speak of the twigs given him gratis, all the year round he was continually getting little presents, in bread and milk, and such kinds of things, which a paysanne has always under her hand, and which she gives without looking too close. Also, rarely one churned butter without saying to him, 'Hansli, we beat butter to-morrow; if you like to bring a pot, you shall have some of the beaten.†

And as for fruit, he had more than he could eat of it; so that it could not fail, things going on in this way, that Hansli should prosper; being besides thoroughly economical. If he spent as much as a batz on the day he went to the town, it was the

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* The mistress of a farm; paysan, the master. I shall use paysanne, after this, without translation, and peasant, for paysan; rarely wanting the word in our general sense.

† "Du battu," I don't know if it means the butter, or the buttermilk.

end of the world.* In the morning, his mother took care he had a good breakfast, after which he took also something in his pocket, without counting that sometimes here, and sometimes there, one gave him a morsel in the kitchens where he was well known; and finally he didn't imagine that he ought always to have something to eat, the moment he had a mind to it.

I am very sorry, but find there's no chance of my getting the romantic part of my story rightly into this letter; so I must even leave it till August, for my sketch of Scott's early life is promised for July, and I must keep my word to time more accurately than hitherto, else, as the letters increase in number, it is too probable I may forget what I promised in them; not that I lose sight even for a moment of my main purpose; but the contents of the letters being absolutely as the Third Fors may order, she orders me here and there so fast sometimes that I can't hold the pace.

In the meantime, compare the picture of country life in Switzerland, already beginning to show itself in outline in our story of the broom-maker, with this following account of the changes produced by recent trade in the country life of the island of Jersey. It is given me by the correspondent who directed me to Professor Kirk's book; (see the

* "Le bout du monde," meaning, he never thought of going any farther.

notes in last letter, p. 119), and is in every point of view of the highest value. Compare especially the operations of the great universal law of supply and demand in the article of fruit, as they affect the broom-boy, and my correspondent; and consider for yourselves, how far that beautiful law may affect, in time to come, not your pippins only, but also your cheese; and even at last your bread.

I give this letter large print; it is quite as important as anything I have myself to say. The italics are mine.

MONT À L'ABBÉ, JERSEY,
April 17, 1873.

DEAR MASTER,—The lesson I have gathered here in Jersey as to the practical working of bodies of small landowners, is that they have three arch-enemies to their life and well-being. First, the covetousness that, for the sake of money-increase, permits and seeks that great cities should drain the island of its life-blood—their best men and their best food or means of food; secondly, love of strong drink and tobacco; *and* thirdly, (for these two last are closely connected,) want of true recreation.

The island is cut up into small properties or holdings, a very much larger proportion of these being occupied and cultivated by the owners themselves than is the case in England. Consequently, as I think, the poor do not suffer as much as in England. Still the times have altered greatly for

the worse within the memory of every middle-aged resident, and the change has been wrought chiefly *by the regular and frequent communication* with London and Paris, but more especially the first, which *in the matter of luxuries of the table, has a maw insatiable.** Thus the Jersey farmer finds that, by devoting his best labour and land to the raising of potatoes sufficiently early to obtain a fancy price for them, very large money-gains are sometimes obtained,—subject also to large risks; for spring frosts on the one hand, and being outstripped by more venturous farmers on the other, are the Jersey farmers' Scylla and Charybdis.

Now for the results. Land, especially that with southern aspect, has increased marvellously in price. Wages have also risen. In many employments nearly doubled. Twenty years ago a carpenter obtained 1*s.* 8*d.* per day. Now he gets 3*s.*; and field labourers' wages have risen nearly as much in proportion. *But* food and lodging have *much more* than doubled. Potatoes for ordinary consumption are now from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per cabot (40 lb.); here I put out of court the early potatoes, which bring, to those who are fortunate in the race, three times that price. Fifteen years ago the regular price for the same quantity was from 5*d.* to 8*d.* Butter is now 1*s.* 4*d.* per lb. Then it was 6*d.*; and milk of course has altered in the

* Compare, if you can get at the book in any library, my article on 'Home and its Economies' in the *Contemporary Review* for May, 1873: (reprinted in "On the Old Road," Vol. ii., p. 179).

same proportion. *Fruit, which formerly could be had in lavish, nay, almost fabulous abundance, is now dearer than in London.* In fact I, who am essentially a frugivorous animal, have found myself unable to indulge in it, and it is only at very rare intervals to be found in any shape at my table. All work harder, and all fare worse; but *the poor specially so.* The well-to-do possess a secret solace denied to them. It is found in the 'share market.' I am told by one employed in a banking-house and 'finance' business here, that it is quite wonderful how fond the Jersey farmers are of Turkish bonds, Grecian and Spanish coupons. Shares in mines seem also to find favour here. My friend in the banking-house tells me that he was once induced to try his fortune in that way. To be cautious, he invested in four different mines. It was perhaps fortunate for him that he never received a penny of his money back from any one of the four.

Another mode by which the earnings of the saving and industrious Jerseyman find their way back to London or Paris is the uncalculated, but not unfrequent, advent of a spendthrift among the heirs of the family. I am told that the landlord of the house I live in is of this stamp, and that two years more of the same rate of expenditure at Paris that he now uses, will bring him to the end of his patrimony.

But what of the stimulants, and the want of recreation? I have coupled these together because I think that drinking is an attempt to find, by a short and easy way, the reward of a true recreation;

to supply a coarse goad to the wits, so that there may be forced or fancied increase of play to the imagination, and to experience, with this, an agreeable physical sensation. I think men will usually drink to get the fascinating combination of the two. True recreation is the cure, and this is not adequately supplied here, either in kind or degree, by tea-meetings and the various religious 'services,' which are almost the only social recreations (no irreverence intended by thus classing them) in use among the country folk of Jersey.

But I had better keep to my facts. The deductions I can well leave to my master.

Here is a fact as to the working of the modern finance system here. There is exceedingly little gold coin in the island; in place thereof we use one-pound notes issued by the banks of the island. *The principal bank issuing these, and also possessing by far the largest list of depositors, has just failed. Liabilities, as estimated by the accountants, not less than £332,000; assets calculated by the same authorities not exceeding £34,000.* The whole island is thrown into the same sort of catastrophe as English merchants by the Overend-Gurney failure. Business in the town nearly at a stand-still, and failures of tradesmen taking place one after another, with a large reserve of the same in prospect. But as the country people are as hard at work as ever, and the panic among the islanders has hindered in nowise the shooting of the blades through the earth, and general bursting forth of buds on the trees, I begin

to think the island may survive to find some other chasm for their accumulations. Unless indeed the champion slays the dragon first. [As far as one of the unlearned may have an opinion, I strongly object both to 'Rough skin,' and 'Red skin,' as name derivations. There have been useful words derived from two sources, and I shall hold that the Latin prefix to the Saxon *kin* establishes a sort of relationship with St. George.]

I am greatly flattered by my correspondent's philological studies; but alas, his pretty result is untenable: no derivation can stand astride on two languages; also, neither he, nor any of my readers, must think of me as setting myself up either for a champion or a leader. If they will look back to the first letter of this book, they will find it is expressly written to quit myself of public responsibility in pursuing my private work. Its purpose is to state clearly what must be done by all of us, as we can, in our place; and to fulfil what duty I personally acknowledge to the State; also I have promised, if I live, to show some example of what I know to be necessary, if no more able person will show it first. That is a very different thing from pretending to leadership in a movement which must one day be as wide as the world. Nay, even my marching days may perhaps soon be over, and the best that I can make of myself be a faithful sign-post. But what I am, or what I fail to be, is of no moment to the cause. The two facts which I have

to teach, or sign, though alone, as it seems, at present, in the signature, that food can only be got out of the ground, and happiness only out of honesty, are not altogether dependent on any one's championship, for recognition among mankind.

For the present, nevertheless, these two important pieces of information are never, so far as I am aware, presented in any scheme of education either to the infantine or adult mind. And, unluckily, no other information whatever, without acquaintance with these facts, can produce either bread and butter, or felicity. I take the following four questions, for instance, as sufficiently characteristic, out of the seventy-eight, proposed, on their Fifth subject of study, to the children of St. Matthew's National School, (school fees, twopence or threepence a week,) by way of enabling them to pass their First of May pleasantly, in this blessed year 1873.

1. Explain the distinction between an identity and an equation, and give an easy example of each. Show that if a simple equation in x is satisfied by two different values of x, it is an identity.
2. In what time will a sum of money double itself if invested at 10 per cent. per annum, compound interest?
3. How many different permutations can be made of the letters in the word *Chillianwallah?* How many if arranged in a circle, instead of a straight line? And how many different

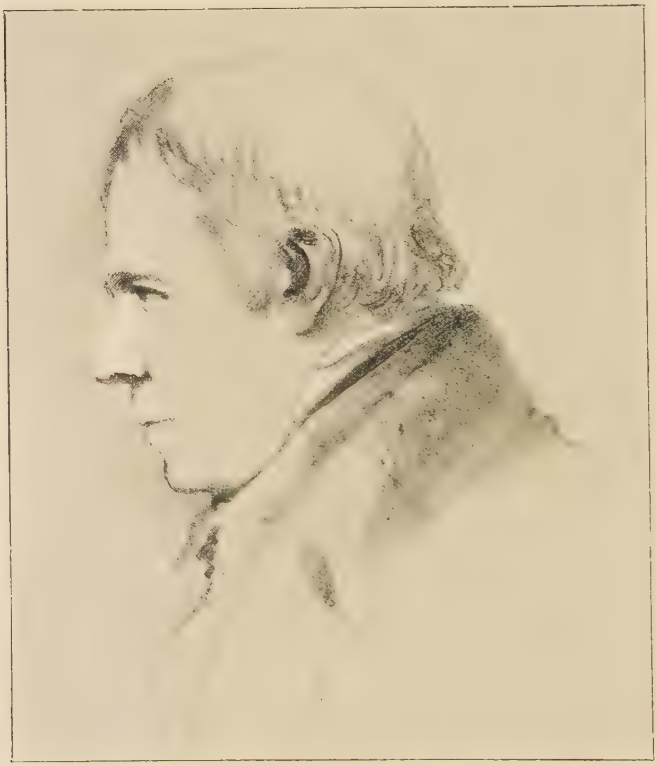
combinations of them, two and two, can be made?

4. Show that if α and β be constant, and ϕ and λ variable, and if

$$\frac{\cos^2\alpha\cos^2\beta(\tan^2\alpha\cos^2\lambda+\tan^2\beta\sin^2\lambda)}{\tan^2\alpha\cos^2\beta\cos^2\lambda+\tan^2\beta\cos^2\alpha\sin^2\lambda}$$
$$=\frac{\sin^2\alpha\cos^2\phi+\sin\beta\sin^8\phi}{\tan^2\alpha\cos^2\phi+\tan^2\beta\sin^2\phi},$$

then $\cos^2\beta\tan\phi=\cos^2\alpha\tan^2\lambda$, unless $\alpha=\beta+n\pi$.

I am bound to state that I could not answer any one of these interrogations myself, and that my readers must therefore allow for the bias of envy in the expression of my belief that to have been able to answer the sort of questions which the First of May once used to propose to English children,—whether they knew a cowslip from an oxlip, and a blackthorn from a white,—would have been incomparably more to the purpose, both of getting their living, and liking it.



WALTER OF THE BORDER-LAND

Facsimile of Chantrey's sketch from life

LETTER XXXI

WAT OF HARDEN

Of the four great English tale-tellers whose dynasties have set or risen within my own memory —Miss Edgeworth, Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray —I find myself greatly at pause in conjecturing, however dimly, what essential good has been effected by them, though they all had the best intentions. Of the essential mischief done by them, there is, unhappily, no doubt whatever. Miss Edgeworth made her morality so impertinent that, since her time, it has only been with fear and trembling that any good novelist has ventured to show the slightest bias in favour of the Ten Commandments. Scott made his romance so ridiculous, that, since his day, one can't help fancying helmets were always pasteboard, and horses were always hobby. Dickens made everybody laugh, or cry, so that they could not go about their business till they had got their faces in wrinkles; and Thackeray settled like a meatfly on whatever one had got for dinner, and made one sick of it.

That, on the other hand, at least Miss Edgeworth and Scott have indeed some inevitable influence for good, I am the more disposed to think,

because nobody now will read them.* Dickens is said to have made people good-natured. If he did, I wonder what sort of natures they had before! Thackeray is similarly asserted to have chastised and repressed flunkeydom,—which it greatly puzzles me to hear, because, as far as I can see, there isn't a carriage now left in all the Row with anybody sitting inside it: the people who ought to have been in it are, every one, hanging on behind the carriage in front.

What good these writers have done, is therefore, to me, I repeat, extremely doubtful. But what good Scott has in him to do, I find no words full enough to tell. His ideal of honour in men and women is inbred, indisputable; fresh as the air of his mountains; firm as their rocks. His conception of purity in woman is even higher than Dante's; his reverence for the filial relation, as deep as Virgil's; his sympathy universal;—there is no rank or condition of men of which he has not shown the loveliest aspect; his code of moral principle is entirely defined, yet taught with a reserved subtlety like Nature's own, so that none but the most earnest readers perceive the intention: and his opinions on all practical subjects are final; the consummate decisions of accurate and inevitable common sense, tempered by the most graceful kindness.

* To which Dr. John Brown replied: "She is less read than I think she should be, but he is enormously read—here and in America."

That he had the one weakness—I will not call it fault—of desiring to possess more and more of the actual soil of the land which was so rich to his imagination, and so dear to his pride; and that, by this postern-gate of idolatry, entered other taints of folly and fault, punished by supreme misery, and atoned for by a generosity and solemn courage more admirable than the unsullied wisdom of his happier days, I have ceased to lament: for all these things make him only the more perfect to us as an example, because he is not exempt from common failings, and has his appointed portion in common pain.

I said we were to learn from him the true relations of Master and Servant; and learning these, there is little left for us to learn; but, on every subject of immediate and vital interest to us, we shall find, as we study his life and words, that both are as authoritative as they are clear. Of his impartiality of judgment, I think it is enough, once for all, to bid you observe that, though himself, by all inherited disposition and accidental circumstances, prejudiced in favour of the Stewart cause, the aristocratic character, and the Catholic religion,—the only perfectly noble character in his first novel is that of a Hanoverian colonel,* and the most exquisitely

* Colonel Talbot, in 'Waverley;' I need not, surely, name the other:—note only that, in speaking of heroism, I never admit into the field of comparison the merely stage-ideals of impossible virtue and fortune—(Ivanhoe, Sir Kenneth, and the like)—but only persons whom Scott meant to be real. Observe also that with

finished and heroic character in all his novels, that of a Presbyterian milkmaid.

But before I press any of his opinions -or I ought rather to say, knowledges—upon you, I must try to give you some idea of his own temper and life. His temper, I say; the mixture of clay, and the fineness of it, out of which the Potter made him; and of his life, what the power of the Third Fors had been upon it, before his own hands could make or mar his fortune, at the turn of tide. I shall do this merely by abstracting and collating (with comment) some passages out of Lockhart's life of him; and adding any elucidatory pieces which Lockhart refers to, or which I can find myself, in his own works, so that you may be able to read them easily together. And observe, I am not writing, or attempting to write, another life of Scott, but only putting together bits of Lockhart's life in the order which my side-notes on the pages indicate for my own reading; and I shall use Lockhart's words, or my own, indifferently, and without the plague of inverted commas. Therefore, if anything is wrong in my statement, Lockhart is not answerable for it; but my own work in the business will nevertheless be little more than what the French call putting dots on the i's, and adding such notes as may be needful for our present thought.

Sir Walter was born on the 15th August, 1771,

Scott, as with Titian, you must often expect the most tender pieces of completion in subordinate characters.

in a house belonging to his father, at the head of the College Wynd, Edinburgh. The house was pulled down to make room for the northern front of the New College; * and the wise people of Edinburgh then built, for I don't know how many thousand pounds, a small vulgar Gothic steeple on the ground, and called it the "Scott Monument." There seems, however, to have been more reason than usual for the destruction of the College Wynd, for Scott was the first survivor of seven children born in it to his father, and appears to have been saved only by the removal to the house in George's Square,† which his father always afterwards occupied; and by being also sent soon afterwards into the open country. He was of purest Border race—seventh in descent from Wat of Harden and the Flower of Yarrow. Here are his six ancestors, from the sixteenth century, in order:—

1. Walter Scott (Auld Wat) of Harden.
2. Sir William Scott of Harden.
3. Walter Scott of Raeburn.
4. Walter Scott, Tutor of Raeburn.
5. Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe.
6. Walter Scott, citizen of Edinburgh.

I will note briefly what is important respecting each of these.

* [See Index under "Edinburgh."]

† I beg my readers to observe that I never flinch from stating a fact that tells against me. This George's Square is in that New Town of Edinburgh which I said, in the first of these letters, I should like to destroy to the ground. [But see p. 185.]

1. Wat of Harden. Harden means 'the ravine of hares.' It is a glen down which a little brook flows to join the river Borthwick, itself a tributary of the Teviot, six miles west of Hawick, and just opposite Branxholm. So long as Sir Walter retained his vigorous habits, he made a yearly pilgrimage to it, with whatever friend happened to be his guest at the time.*

Wat's wife, Mary, the Flower of Yarrow, is said to have chiefly owed her celebrity to the love of an English captive,—a beautiful child whom she had rescued from the tender mercies† of Wat's mosstroopers, on their return from a Cumberland foray. The youth grew up under her protection, and is believed to have written both the words and music of many of the best songs of the Border.‡

This story is evidently the germ of that of the 'Lay of the last Minstrel,' only the captivity is there of a Scottish boy to the English. The lines describing Wat of Harden are in the 4th canto,—

> "Marauding chief; his sole delight
> The moonlight raid, the morning fight.
> Not even the Flower of Yarrow's charms,
> In youth, might tame his rage for arms;

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* Lockhart's Life, 8vo. Edinburgh: Cadell, 1837. Vol. i. p. 65. In my following foot-notes I shall only give volume and page —the book being understood.

† i. 67. What sort of tender mercies were to be expected?

‡ His name unknown, according to Leyden, is perhaps discoverable; but what songs? Though composed by an Englishman, have they the special character of Scottish music?

And still in age he spurned at rest,
And still his brows the helmet pressed,
Albeit the blanchèd locks below
Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow." *

With these, read also the answer of the lady of Branksome, 23rd and 24th stanzas,—

"'Say to your lords of high emprize,
Who war on women and on boys,—
For the young heir of Branksome's line,
God be his aid; and God be mine:
Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
Here, while I live, no foe finds room.'
* * * * * *
Proud she looked round, applause to claim;
Then lightened Thirlstane's eye of flame;
His bugle Wat of Harden blew.
Pensils † and pennons wide were flung,
To heaven the Border slogan rung,
'St. Mary, for the young Buccleugh.'"

Let us stop here to consider what good there may be in all this for *us*. The last line, "St. Mary for the young Buccleugh," probably sounds absurd enough to you. You have nothing whatever

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* Dinlay; in Liddesdale.

† Pensil, a flag hanging down—'pensile.' Pennon, a stiff flag sustained by a cross arm, like the broad part of a weathercock. Properly, it is the stiff-set feather of an arrow.

"Ny autres riens qui d'or ne fust
Fors que les pennons, et le fust."

'Romance of the Rose,' of Love's arrows: Chaucer translates,

"For all was gold, men might see,
Out-take the feathers and the tree."

to do, you think, with either of these personages. You don't care for any St. Mary; and still less for any, either young or old, Buccleugh?

Well, I'm sorry for you:—but if you don't care for St. Mary, the wife of Joseph, do you care at all for St. Mary-Anne, the wife of Joe? Have you any faith in the holiness of your own wives, who are here, in flesh and blood? or do you verily wish them, as Mr. Mill* would have it—sacrifice all pretence to saintship, as to holy days—to follow "some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby"? And you don't care for the young Buccleugh? Cut away the cleugh, then, and read the Buc backwards. Do you care for your own cub as much as Sir Walter would have cared for his own beast? (see, farther on, how he takes care of his wire-haired terrier, Spice,) or as any beast cares for *its* cub? Or do you send your poor little brat to make money for you, like your wife; as though a cock should send his hen and chickens to pick up what they could for *him*; and it were the usual law of nature that nestlings should feed the parent birds? If that be your way of liberal modern life, believe me, the Border faith in its Mary and its master, however servile, was not benighted in comparison.

But the Border morals? "Marauding chief,

* People would not have me speak any more harm of Mr. Mill, because he's dead, I suppose? Dead or alive, all's one to me, with mischievous persons; but alas! how very grievously all's two to me, when they are helpful and noble ones.

whose sole delight," etc. Just look for the passages indicated under the words 'thieving' and 'robbery' in the index to the first volume of 'Fors.' I will come back to this point: for the present, in order to get it more clearly into your minds, remember that the Flower of Yarrow was the chieftainess to whom the invention of serving the empty dish with two spurs in it, for hint to her husband that he must ride for his next dinner, is first ascribed. Also, for comparison of the English customs of the same time, read this little bit of a letter of Lord Northumberland's to Henry VIII. in 1533.*

"Please it your most gracious Highness to be advertised that my comptroller, with Raynold Carnaby, desired licence of me to invade the realm of Scotland, to the annoyance of your Highness's enemies, and so they did meet upon Monday before night, at Warhope, upon North Tyne water, to the number of 1500 men: and so invaded Scotland, at the hour of eight of the clock at night, and actively did set upon a town † called Branxholm, where the Lord of Buccleugh dwelleth, albeit that knight he was not at home. And so they burnt the said Branxholm, and other towns, and had ordered themselves so that sundry of the said Lord Buccleugh's servants, who did issue forth of his gates, were taken prisoners. They did not leave

* Out of the first of Scott's notes to the Lay, but the note is so long that careless readers are sure to miss the points; also I give modern spelling for greater ease.

† A walled group of houses: tynen, Saxon, to shut in (Johnson).

one house, one stack of corn, nor one sheaf without the gate of the said Lord Buccleugh unburnt; and so in the breaking of the day receded homeward. And thus, thanks be to God, your Highness's subjects, about the hour of twelve of the clock the same day, came into this, your Highness's realm, bringing with them above forty Scotsmen prisoners, one of them named Scott, of the surname and kin of the said Lord of Buccleugh. And of his household they brought also three hundred nowte" (cattle), "and above sixty horses and mares, keeping in safety from loss or hurt all your said Highness's subjects."

They had met the evening before on the North Tyne, under Carter Fell; (you will find the place partly marked as "Plashett's coal-fields" in modern atlases;) rode and marched their twenty miles to Branxholm; busied themselves there, as we hear, till dawn, and so back thirty miles down Liddesdale,—a fifty miles' ride and walk altogether, all finished before twelve on Tuesday: besides what pillaging and burning had to be done.

Now, but one more point is to be noticed, and we will get on with our genealogy.

After this bit of the Earl's letter, you will better understand the speech of the Lady of Buccleugh, defending her castle in the absence of her lord, and with her boy taken prisoner. And now look back to my 25th letter, for I want you not to forget Alice of Salisbury. King Edward's first sight of her was just after she had held her castle exactly in this

way, against a raid of the Scots in Lord Salisbury's absence. Edward rode night and day to help her; and the Scots besiegers, breaking up at his approach, this is what follows, which you may receive on Froissart's telling as the vital and effectual truth of the matter. A modern English critic will indeed always and instantly extinguish this vital truth; there is in it something inherently detestable to him; thus the editor of Johnes' Froissart prefaces this very story with "the romance—for it is nothing more." Now the labyrinth of Crete, and the labyrinth of Woodstock, are indeed out of sight; and of a real Ariadne or Rosamond, a blockhead might be excused for doubting; but St. George's Chapel at Windsor—(or Winde-Rose, as Froissart prettily transposes it, like Adriane for Ariadne) is a very visible piece of romance; and the stones of it were laid, and the blue riband which your queen wears on her breast is fastened, to this day, by the hand of Alice of Salisbury.

"So the King came at noon; and angry he was to find the Scots gone; for he had come in such haste that all his people and horses were dead-tired and toiled. So every one went to rest; and the King, as soon as he was disarmed, took ten or twelve knights with him, and went towards the castle to salute the Countess, and see how the defence had been made. So soon as the Lady of Salisbury knew of the King's coming, she made all the gates be opened," (inmost and outmost at once,) "and came out, so richly dressed

that every one was wonderstruck at her, and no one could cease looking at her, nor from receiving, as if they had been her mirrors, the reflection of her great nobleness, and her great beauty, and her gracious speaking and bearing herself. When she came to the King, she bowed down to the earth, over against him, in thanking him for his help, and brought him to the castle, to delight him and honour him—as she who well knew how to do it. Every one looked at her, even to amazement, and the King himself could not stop looking at her, for it seemed to him that in the world never was lady who was so much to be loved as she. So they went hand in hand into the castle, and the Lady led him first into the great hall, and then into her own chamber" (what the French now call a pouting-room, but the ladies of that day either smiled or frowned, but did not pout), "which was nobly furnished, as befitted such lady. And always the King looked at the gentle Lady, so hard that she became all ashamed. When he had looked at her a long while, he went away to a window, to lean upon it, and began to think deeply. The Lady went to cheer the other knights and squires; then ordered the dinner to be got ready, and the room to be dressed. When she had devised all, and commanded her people what seemed good to her, she returned with a gladsome face before the King," —in whose presence we must leave her yet awhile, having other matters to attend to.

So much for Wat of Harden's life then, and his

wife's. We shall get a little faster on with the genealogy after this fair start.

II. Sir William Scott of Harden.

Wat's eldest son; distinguished by the early favour of James VI.

In his youth, engaging in a foray on the lands of Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank, and being taken prisoner, Murray offers him choice between being hanged, or marrying the plainest of his daughters. The contract of marriage, written on the parchment of a drum, is still in possession of the family of Harden.*

This is Lockhart's reading of the circumstances, and I give his own statement of them in the note below. But his assumption of the extreme plainness of the young lady, and of the absolute wordly-mindedness of the mother, are both examples of the modern manner of reading traditions, out of which some amusement may be gathered by looking only at them on the grotesque side, and interpreting that grotesqueness ungenerously. There may, indeed, be farther ground than Lockhart has thought it worth while to state for his colour of the facts; but all that can be justly gathered from those he has told is that, Sir Gideon having determined

* i. 68. "The indignant laird was on the point of desiring his prisoner to say a last prayer, when his more considerate dame interposed milder counsels, suggesting that the culprit was born to a good estate, and that they had three unmarried daughters. Young Harden, it is said, not without hesitation, agreed to save his life by taking the plainest of the three off their hands."

the death of his troublesome neighbour, Lady Murray interfered to save his life: and could not more forcibly touch her husband's purpose than by reminding him that hostility might be better ended in alliance than in death.

The sincere and careful affection which Sir William of Harden afterwards shows to all his children by the Maid of Elibank, and his naming one of them after her father, induce me still farther to trust in the fairer reading of the tradition. I should, indeed, have been disposed to attach some weight, on the side of the vulgar story, to the curiously religious tendencies in Sir William's children, which seem to point to some condition of feeling in the mother, arising out of despised life. Women are made nobly religious by the possession of extreme beauty, and morbidly so by distressed consciousness of the want of it; but there is no reason for insisting on this probability, since both the Christian and surname of Sir Gideon Murray point to his connection with the party in Scotland which was at this time made strong in battle by religious faith, and melancholy in peace by religious passion.

III. Walter Scott, first Laird of Raeburn; third son of Sir William and this enforced bride of Elibank. They had four sons altogether; the eldest, William, becomes the second Sir William of Harden; their father settled the lands of Raeburn upon Walter; and of Highchester on his second son, Gideon, named, after the rough father-in-law, of Elibank.

Now about this time (1657), George Fox comes into Scotland: boasting that "as he first set his feet upon Scottish ground he felt the seed of grace to sparkle about him like innumerable sparks of fire." And he forthwith succeeds in making Quakers of Gideon, Walter, and Walter's wife. This is too much for Sir William of Harden, the eldest brother, who not only remains a staunch Jacobite, but obtains order from the Privy Council of Scotland to imprison his brother and brother's wife; that they may hold no further converse with Quakers, and also to "separate and take away their children, being two sons and a daughter, from their family and education, and to breed them in some convenient place." Which is accordingly done; and poor Walter, who had found pleasantly conversible Quakers in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, is sent to Jedburgh, with strict orders to the Jedburgh magistrates to keep Quakers out of his way. The children are sent to an orthodox school by Sir William; and of the daughter I find nothing further; but the two sons both became good scholars, and were so effectually cured of Quakerism, that the elder (I don't find his Christian name), just as he came of age, was killed in a duel with Pringle of Crichton, fought with swords in a field near Selkirk—ever since called, from the Raeburn's death, "the Raeburn meadow-spot;"—and the younger, Walter, who then became "Tutor of Raeburn," *i.e.*, guardian to his infant nephew, intrigued in the cause of the exiled Stewarts till he had lost

all he had in the world—ran a narrow risk of being hanged—was saved by the interference of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch—founded a Jacobite club in Edinburgh, in which the conversation is said to have been maintained in Latin—and wore his beard unclipped to his dying day, vowing no razor should pass on it until the return of the Stewarts, whence he held his Border name of "Beardie."

It is only when we remember how often this history must have dwelt on Sir Walter's mind that we can understand the tender subtlety of design with which he has completed, even in the weary time of his declining life, the almost eventless story of 'Redgauntlet,' and given, as we shall presently see, in connection with it, the most complete, though disguised, portion of his own biography.

IV. Beardie. I find no details of Beardie's life given by Scott, but he was living at Leasudden when his landlord, Scott of Harden,* living at Mertoun House, addressed to him the lines given in the note to the introduction to the sixth canto of 'Marmion,' in which Scott himself partly adopts the verses, writing from Mertoun House to Richard Heber.

"For course of blood, our proverbs dream,
Is warmer than the mountain stream.
And thus my Christmas still I hold
Where my great grandsire came of old,†

* Eldest son, or grandson, of Sir William Scott of Harden, the second in our genealogy.

† Came by invitation from his landlord, Scott of Harden.

'With amber beard and flaxen hair,
And reverend apostolic air,
The feast and holytide to share,
And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts divine.'
Small thought was his, in after-time,
E'er to be hitched into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast
That he was loyal to his cost,
The banished race of kings revered,
And lost his land—but kept his beard,—"

"a mark of attachment," Scott adds in his note, "which I suppose had been common during Cromwell's usurpation; for in Cowley's 'Cutter of Coleman Street' one drunken cavalier upbraids another that when he was not able to pay a barber, he affected to 'wear a beard for the king.'"

Observe, here, that you must always be on your guard, in reading Scott's notes or private letters, against his way of kindly laughing at what he honours more deeply than he likes to confess. The house in which Beardie died was still standing when Sir Walter wrote his autobiography, (1808), at the north-east entrance of the churchyard of Kelso.

He left three sons. Any that remain of the family of the elder are long since settled in America (male heirs extinct). James Scott, well known in India as one of the original settlers of Prince of Wales Island, was a son of the youngest, who died at Lasswade, in Midlothian (first mention of Scott's Lasswade).

But of the second son, Scott's grandfather, we have to learn much.

v. Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe, second son of Beardie. I cannot shorten Scott's own account of the circumstances which determined his choice of life.

"My grandfather was originally bred to the sea, but being shipwrecked near Dundee in his trial voyage, he took such a sincere dislike to that element, that he could not be persuaded to a second attempt. This occasioned a quarrel between him and his father, who left him to shift for himself. Robert was one of those active spirits to whom this was no misfortune. He turned Whig upon the spot, and fairly abjured his father's politics and his learned poverty. His chief and relative, Mr. Scott of Harden, gave him a lease of the farm of Sandy-Knowe, comprehending the rocks in the centre of which Smailholm or Sandy-Knowe Tower is situated. He took for his shepherd an old man called Hogg, who willingly lent him, out of respect to his family, his whole savings, about £30, to stock the new farm. With this sum, which it seems was at the time sufficient for the purpose, the master and servant * set off to purchase a stock of sheep at Whitsun-tryste, a fair held on a hill near Wooler, in Northumberland. The old shepherd went carefully from drove to drove, till he found a hirsel likely to answer their purpose, and then returned to tell his master to come up and conclude the bargain. But what was his surprise to see him

* Here, you see, our subject begins to purpose!

galloping a mettled hunter about the race-course, and to find he had expended the whole stock in this extraordinary purchase! Moses' bargain of green spectacles did not strike more dismay into the Vicar of Wakefield's family than my grandfather's rashness into the poor old shepherd. The thing, however, was irretrievable, and they returned without the sheep. In the course of a few days, however, my grandfather, who was one of the best horsemen of his time, attended John Scott of Harden's hounds on this same horse, and displayed him to such advantage that he sold him for double the original price. The farm was now stocked in earnest, and the rest of my grandfather's career was that of successful industry. He was one of the first who were active in the cattle trade, afterwards carried to such an extent between the Highlands of Scotland and the leading counties in England, and by his droving transactions acquired a considerable sum of money. He was a man of middle stature, extremely active, quick, keen, and fiery in his temper, stubbornly honest, and so distinguished for his skill in country matters that he was the general referee in all points of dispute which occurred in the neighbourhood. His birth being admitted as gentle, gave him access to the best society in the county, and his dexterity in country sports, particularly hunting, made him an acceptable companion in the field as well as at the table."

Thus, then, between Auld Wat of Harden, and Scott's grandfather, we have four generations,

numbering approximately a hundred and fifty years, from 1580 to 1730,* and in that time we have the great change in national manners from stealing cattle to breeding and selling them, which at first might seem a change in the way of gradually increasing honesty. But observe that this *first* cattle-dealer of our line is "*stubbornly* honest," a quality which it would be unsafe to calculate upon in any dealer of our own days.

Do you suppose, then, that this honesty was a sudden and momentary virtue—a lightning flash of probity between the two darknesses of Auld Wat's thieving and modern cozening?

Not so. That open thieving had no dishonesty in it whatsoever. Far the contrary. Of all conceivable ways of getting a living, except by actual digging of the ground, this is precisely the honestest. All other gentlemanly professions but this have taint of dishonesty in them. Even the best—the physician's—involves temptation to many forms of cozening. How many second-rate mediciners have lived, think you, on prescriptions of bread pills and rose-coloured water?—how many, even of leading physicians, owe all their success to skill unaided by pretence? Of clergymen, how many preach wholly what they know to be true without fear of their congregations? Of lawyers, of authors, of painters, what need we speak? These

* I give the round numbers for better remembering. Wat of Harden married the Flower of Yarrow in 1567; Robert of Sandy-Knowe married Barbara Haliburton in 1728.

all, so far as they try to please the mob for their living, are true cozeners,—unsound in the very heart's core. But Wat of Harden, setting my farm on fire, and driving off my cattle, is no rogue. An enemy, yes, and a spoiler; but no more a rogue than the rock eagles. And Robert the first cattle-dealer's honesty is directly *inherited from his race*, and notable as a virtue, not in opposition to *their* character, but to ours. For men become dishonest by occult trade, not by open rapine.

There are, nevertheless, some very definite faults in our pastoral Robert of Sandy-Knowe, which Sir Walter himself inherits and recognizes in his own temper, and which were in him severely punished. Of the rash investment of the poor shepherd's fortune we shall presently hear what Sir Walter thought. Robert's graver fault, the turning Whig to displease his father, is especially to be remembered in connection with Sir Walter's frequent warnings against the sacrifice to momentary passion of what ought to be the fixed principles of youth. It has not been enough noticed that the design of his first and greatest story is to exhibit and reprehend, while it tenderly indicates the many grounds for forgiving, the change of political temper under circumstances of personal irritation.

But in the virtues of Robert Scott, far outnumbering his failings, and above all in this absolute honesty and his contentment in the joy of country life, all the noblest roots of his grandson's character found their happy hold.

Note every syllable of the description of him given in the introduction to the third canto of 'Marmion':

> "Still, with vain fondness, could I trace
> Anew each kind familiar face
> That brightened at our evening fire;
> From the thatched mansion's grey-haired sire,
> Wise without learning, plain and good,
> And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;
> Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen,
> Showed what in youth its glance had been:
> Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
> Content with equity unbought,
> To him, the venerable priest,
> Our frequent and familiar guest."

Note, I say, every word of this. The faces "brightened at the evening fire,"—not a patent stove; fancy the difference in effect on the imagination, in the dark long nights of a Scottish winter, between the flickering shadows of firelight, and utter gloom of a room warmed by a close stove!

"The *thatched* mansion's."—The coolest roof in summer, warmest in winter. Among the various mischievous things done in France, apparently by the orders of Napoleon III., but in reality by the foolish nation uttering itself through his passive voice, (he being all his days only a feeble Pan's pipe, or Charon's boatswain's whistle, instead of a true king,) the substitution of tiles for thatch on the cottages of Picardy was one of the most barbarous. It was to prevent fire, forsooth! and all the while the poor peasants could not afford candles, except

to drip about over their church floors. See above, Letter VI. (vol. i. p. 118).

"Wise without learning."—By no means able, this Border rider, to state how many different arrangements may be made of the letters in the word Chillianwallah. He contrived to exist, and educate his grandson to come to something, without that information.

"Plain, and good."—Consider the value there is in that virtue of plainness—legibility, shall we say?—in the letters of character. A clear-printed man, readable at a glance. There are such things as illuminated letters of character also,—beautifully unreadable; but this legibility in the head of a family is greatly precious.

"And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood."—I am not sure if this is merely an ordinary expression of family pride, or whether, which I rather think, Scott means to mark distinctly the literal gentleness and softening of character in his grandfather, and in the Lowland Scottish shepherd of his day, as opposed to the still fiery temper of the Highland clans—the blood being equally pure, but the race altogether softer and more Saxon. Even Auld Wat was fair-haired, and Beardie has "amber beard and flaxen hair."

> "Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
> Content with equity unbought."—

Here you have the exactly right and wise condition of the legal profession.

All good judging, and all good preaching, must be given gratis. Look back to what I have incidentally said of lawyers and clergy, as professional —that is to say, as living by their judgment, and sermons. You will perhaps now be able to receive my conclusive statement, that all such professional sale of justice and mercy is a deadly sin. A man may sell the work of his hands, but not his equity, nor his piety. Let him live by his spade; and if his neighbours find him wise enough to decide a dispute between them, or if he is in modesty and simplicity able to give them a piece of pious advice, let him do so, in Heaven's name, but not take a fee for it.

Finally, Robert Scott is a cattle-dealer, yet a gentleman, giving us the exact balance of right between the pride which refuses a simple employment, and the baseness which makes that simple employment disgraceful, because dishonest. Being wholly upright, he can sell cattle, yet not disgrace his lineage. We shall return presently to his house; but must first complete, so as to get our range of view within due limits, the sketch of the entire ancestral line.

VI. Walter Scott, of George's Square, Edinburgh, Scott's father, born 1729.

He was the eldest son of Robert of Sandy-Knowe, and had three brothers and a sister, namely, Captain Robert Scott, in East India Service; Thomas Scott, cattle-dealer, following his father's business; a younger brother who died early, (also)

in East India Service; and the sister Janet, whose part in Scott's education was no less constant, and perhaps more influential, than even his mother's. Scott's regard for one of his Indian uncles, and his regret for the other's death, are both traceable in the development of the character of Colonel Mannering; but of his uncle Thomas, and his aunt Jessie, there is much more to be learned and thought on.

The cattle-dealer followed his father's business prosperously; was twice married — first to Miss Raeburn, and then to Miss Rutherford of Knowsouth—and retired, in his old age, upon a handsome independence. Lockhart, visiting him with Sir Walter, two years before the old man's death, (he being then eighty-eight years old,) thus describes him:

"I thought him about the most venerable figure I had ever set my eyes on,—tall and erect, with long flowing tresses of the most silvery whiteness, and stockings rolled up over his knees, after the fashion of three generations back. He sat reading his Bible without spectacles, and did not, for a moment, perceive that any one had entered his room; but on recognizing his nephew he rose with cordial alacrity, kissing him on both cheeks, and exclaiming, 'God bless thee, Walter, my man; thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good.' His remarks were lively and sagacious, and delivered with a touch of that humour which seems to have been shared by most of the family.

He had the air and manners of an ancient gentleman, and must in his day have been eminently handsome."

Next read Sir Walter Scott's entry made in his copy of the Haliburton Memorials:—

"The said Thomas Scott died at Monklaw, near Jedburgh, at two of the clock, 27th January, 1823, in the 90th year of his life, and fully possessed of all his faculties. He read till nearly the year before his death; and being a great musician on the Scotch pipes, had, when on his deathbed, a favourite tune played over to him by his son James, that he might be sure he left him in full possession of it. After hearing it, he hummed it over himself, and corrected it in several of the notes. The air was that called 'Sour Plums in Galashiels.' When barks and other tonics were given him during his last illness, he privately spat them into his handkerchief, saying, as he had lived all his life without taking doctor's drugs, he wished to die without doing so."

No occasion whatever for deathbed repentances, you perceive, on the part of this old gentleman; no particular care even for the disposition of his handsome independence; but here is a bequest of which one must see one's son in full possession—here is a thing to be well looked after, before setting out for heaven, that the tune of "Sour Plums in Galashiels" may still be played on earth in an incorrupt manner, and no damnable French or English variations intruded upon the

solemn and authentic melody thereof. His views on the subject of Materia Medica are also greatly to be respected.

"I saw more than once," Lockhart goes on, "this respectable man's sister (Scott's aunt Janet), who had married her cousin Walter, Laird of Raeburn, thus adding a new link to the closeness of the family connection. She also must have been, in her youth, remarkable for personal attractions; as it was, she dwells on my memory as the perfect picture of an old Scotch lady, with a great deal of simple dignity in her bearing, but with the softest eye and the sweetest voice, and a charm of meekness and gentleness about every look and expression. She spoke her native language pure and undiluted, but without the slightest tincture of that vulgarity which now seems almost unavoidable in the oral use of a dialect so long banished from courts, and which has not been avoided by any modern writer who has ventured to introduce it, with the exception of Scott, and I may add, speaking generally, of Burns. Lady Raeburn, as she was universally styled, may be numbered with those friends of early days whom her nephew has alluded to in one of his prefaces as preserving what we may fancy to have been the old Scotch of Holyrood."

To this aunt, to his grandmother, his mother, and to the noble and most wise Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, Dr. Adam, Scott owed the essential part of his "education," which began in

this manner. At eighteen months old his lameness came on, from sudden cold, bad air, and other such causes. His mother's father, Dr. Rutherford, advised sending him to the country; he is sent to his grandfather's at Sandy-Knowe, where he first becomes conscious of life, and where his grandmother and aunt Janet beautifully instruct, but partly spoil him. When he is eight years old, he returns to, and remains in his father's house at George's Square. And now note the following sentence:—

"I felt the change from being a single indulged brat, to becoming a member of a large family, very severely; for under the gentle government of my kind grandmother, who was meekness itself, and of my aunt, who, though of a higher temper, was exceedingly attached to me, I had acquired a degree of license which could not be permitted in a large family. I had sense enough, however, to bend my temper to my new circumstances; but such was the agony which I internally experienced, that I have guarded against nothing more, in the education of my own family, than against their acquiring habits of self-willed caprice and domination."

The indulgence, however, no less than the subsequent discipline, had been indeed altogether wholesome for the boy, he being of the noble temper which is the better for having its way. The essential virtue of the training he had in his grandfather's and father's house, and his aunt Jessie's at Kelso, I will trace further in next letter.

LETTER XXXII

SANDY-KNOWE

I DO not know how far I shall be able in this letter to carry you forward in the story of Scott's life; let me first, therefore, map its divisions clearly; for then, wherever we have to stop, we can return to our point in fit time.

First, note these three great divisions—essentially those of all men's lives, but singularly separate in his,—the days of youth, of labour, and of death.

Youth is properly the forming time—that in which a man makes himself, or is made, what he is for ever to be. Then comes the time of labour, when, having become the best he can be, he does the best he can do. Then the time of death, which, in happy lives, is very short: but always a *time*. The ceasing to breathe is only the end of death.

Scott records the beginning of his own in the following entry in his diary, which reviews the life then virtually ended:—

December 18th, 1825.*—What a life mine has been!

* Vol. vi., p. 164.

—half educated, almost wholly neglected, or left to myself; stuffing my head with most nonsensical trash, and undervalued by most of my companions for a time; getting forward, and held a bold, clever fellow, contrary to the opinion of all who thought me a mere dreamer; broken-hearted for two years; my heart handsomely pieced again, but the crack will remain till my dying day. Rich and poor four or five times: once on the verge of ruin, yet opened a new source of wealth almost overflowing. Now to be broken in my pitch of pride.* . . . .

"Nobody in the end can lose a penny by me; that is one comfort. Men will think pride has had a fall. Let them indulge in their own pride in thinking that my fall will make them higher, or seem so at least. I have the satisfaction to recollect that my prosperity has been of advantage to many, and to hope that some at least will forgive my transient wealth on account of the innocence of my intentions, and my real wish to do good to the poor. Sad hearts, too, at Darnick, and in the cottages of Abbotsford. I have half resolved never to see the place again. How could I tread my hall with such a diminished crest?—how live a poor, indebted man, where I was once the wealthy, the honoured? I was to have gone there on Saturday, in joy and prosperity, to receive my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish, but the thoughts of parting from these dumb creatures have moved

* Portion omitted short, and of no moment just now. I shall refer to it afterwards.

me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor things, I must get them kind masters! There may be yet those who, loving me, may love my dog because it has been mine. I must end these gloomy forebodings, or I shall lose the tone of mind with which men should meet distress. I feel my dogs' feet on my knees; I hear them whining, and seeking me everywhere."

He was fifty-four on the 15th August of that year, and spoke his last words—"God bless you all,"—on the 21st September, 1832: so ending seven years of death.

His youth, like the youth of all the greatest men, had been long, and rich in peace, and altogether accumulative and crescent. I count it to end with that pain which you see he remembers to his dying day, given him by—Lilias Redgauntlet, in October, 1796. Whereon he sets himself to his work, which goes on nobly for thirty years lapping over a little into the death-time* ('Woodstock' showing scarcely a trace of diminution of power).

Count, therefore, thus:—

Youth, twenty-five years	...	1771—1796.
Labour-time, thirty years	...	1796—1826.
Death-time, seven years	...	1825—1832.

* The actual toil gone through by him is far greater during the last years than before—in fact it is unceasing, and mortal; but I count only as the true labour-time that which is healthy and fruitful.

The great period of mid-life is again divided exactly in the midst by the change of temper which made him accurate instead of fantastic in delineation and therefore habitually write in prose rather than verse. The Lady of the Lake is his last poem, (1810). Rokeby, (1812) is a versified novel; the Lord of the Isles is not so much. The steady legal and historical work of 1810—1814, issuing in the Essay on Scottish Judicature, and the Life of Swift, with preparation for his long-cherished purpose of an edition and Life of Pope,* ("the true deacon of the craft," as Scott often called him,) confirmed, while they restrained and chastised, his imaginative power; and Waverley, (begun in 1805) was completed in 1814. The apparently unproductive year of accurate study, 1811, divides the thirty years of mid-life in the precise centre, giving fifteen to song, and fifteen to history.

You may be surprised at my speaking of the novels as history. But Scott's final estimate of his own work, given in 1830, is a perfectly sincere and perfectly just one; (received, of course, with the allowance I have warned you always to make for his manner of reserve in expressing deep feelings). "He replied† that in what he had

* If my own life is spared a little longer, I can at least rescue Pope from the hands of his present scavenger biographer; but alas, for Scott's loving hand and noble thought, lost to him!

† To the speech of Mr. Baillie of Jerviswoode; vol. vii., p. 221.

done for Scotland as a writer, he was no more entitled to the merit which had been ascribed to him than the servant who scours the brasses to the credit of having made them; that he had perhaps been a good housemaid to Scotland, and given the country a 'rubbing up;' and in so doing might have deserved some praise for assiduity, and that was all." Distinguish, however, yourselves, and remember that Scott always tacitly distinguishes, between the industry which deserves praise, and the love which disdains it. You do not praise Old Mortality for his love to his people; you praise him for his patience over a bit of moss in a troublesome corner. Scott is the Old Mortality, not of tables of stone, but of the fleshly tables of the heart.

We address ourselves to-day, then, to begin the analysis of the influences upon him during the first period of twenty-five years, during which he built and filled the treasure-house of his own heart. But this time of youth I must again map out in minor detail, that we may grasp it clearly.

1. From birth to three years old. In Edinburgh, a sickly child; permanent lameness contracted, 1771—1774.

2. Three years old to four. Recovers health at Sandy-Knowe. The dawn of conscious life, 1774—1775.

3. Four years old to five. At Bath, with his aunt, passing through London on the way to it. Learns to read, and much besides, 1775—1776.

4. Five years old to eight. At Sandy-Knowe. Pastoral life in its perfectness forming his character: (an important though short interval at Prestonpans begins his interest in sea-shore), 1776—1779.

5. Eight years old to twelve. School life, under the Rector Adams, at High School of Edinburgh, with his aunt Janet to receive him at Kelso, 1779—1783.

6. Twelve years old to fifteen. College life, broken by illness, his uncle Robert taking good care of him at Rosebank, 1783—1786.

7. Fifteen to twenty-five. Apprenticeship to his father, and law practice entered on. Study of human life, and of various literature in Edinburgh. His first fee of any importance expended on a silver taper-stand for his mother, 1786—1796.

You have thus 'seven ages' of his youth to examine, one by one; and this convenient number really comes out without the least forcing; for the virtual, though not formal, apprenticeship to his father—happiest of states for a good son—continues through all the time of his legal practice. I only feel a little compunction at crowding the Prestonpans time together with the second Sandy-Knowe time; but the former is too short to be made a period, though of infinite importance to Scott's life. Hear how he writes of it,* revisiting the place fifty years afterwards:—

"I knew the house of Mr. Warroch, where we

* Vol. vii., p. 213.

lived," (see where the name of the Point of Warroch in Guy Mannering comes from!) "I recollected my juvenile ideas of dignity attendant on the large gate, a black arch which lets out upon the sea. I saw the Links where I arranged my shells upon the turf, and swam my little skiff in the pools. Many recollections of my kind aunt—of old George Constable —of Dalgetty" (you know *that* name also, don't you?), "a virtuous half-pay lieutenant, who swaggered his solitary walk on the parade, as he called a little open space before the same port." (Before the black arch, Scott means, not the harbour.) And he falls in love also there, first—"as children love."

And now we can begin to count the rosary of his youth, bead by bead.

1st period—From birth to three years old.

I have hitherto said nothing to you of his father or mother, nor shall I yet, except to bid you observe that they had been thirteen years married when Scott was born; and that his mother was the daughter of a physician, Dr. Rutherford, who had been educated under Boerhaave. This fact might be carelessly passed by you in reading Lockhart; but if you will take the pains to look through Johnson's life of Boerhaave, you will see how perfectly pure and beautiful and strong every influence was, which, from whatever distance, touched the early life of Scott. I quote a sentence or two from Johnson's closing account of Dr. Rutherford's master:—

"There was in his air and motion something rough and artless, but so majestic and great at the same time, that no man ever looked upon him without veneration, and a kind of tacit submission to the superiority of his genius. The vigour and activity of his mind sparkled visibly in his eyes, nor was it ever observed that any change of his fortune, or alteration in his affairs, whether happy or unfortunate, affected his countenance.

"His greatest pleasure was to retire to his house in the country, where he had a garden stored with all the herbs and trees which the climate would bear; here he used to enjoy his hours unmolested, and prosecute his studies without interruption." *

* Not to break away from my text too long, I add one or two farther points worth notice, here:—

"Boerhaave lost none of his hours, but when he had attained one science attempted another. He added physick to divinity, chemistry to the mathematicks, and anatomy to botany.

"He knew the importance of his own writings to mankind, and lest he might, by a roughness and barbarity of style too frequent among men of great learning, disappoint his own intentions, and make his labours less useful, he did not neglect the politer arts of eloquence and poetry. Thus was his learning at once various and exact, profound and agreeable.

"But his knowledge, however uncommon, holds in his character but the second place; his virtue was yet much more uncommon than his learning.

"Being once asked by a friend, who had often admired his patience under great provocations, whether he knew what it was to be angry, and by what means he had so entirely suppressed that impetuous and ungovernable passion, he answered, with the utmost frankness and sincerity, that he was naturally quick of resentment, but that he had, by daily prayer and meditation, at length attained to this mastery over himself."

The school of medicine in Edinburgh owed its rise to this man, and it was by his pupil Dr. Rutherford's advice, as we saw, that the infant Walter's life was saved. His mother could not nurse him, and his first nurse had consumption. To this, and the close air of the wynd, must be attributed the strength of the childish fever which took away the use of the right limb when he was eighteen months old. How many of your own children die, think you, or are wasted with sickness, from the same causes, in our increasing cities? Scott's lameness, however, we shall find, was, in the end, like every other condition of his appointed existence, helpful to him.

A letter from my dear friend, Dr. John Brown, corrects (to my great delight) a mistake about George's Square I made in my last letter. It is not in the New Town, but in what was then a meadow district, sloping to the south from old Edinburgh; and the air of it would be almost as healthy for the child as that of the open country. But the change to George's Square, though it checked the illness, did not restore the use of the limb; the boy wanted exercise as well as air, and Dr. Rutherford sent him to his other grandfather's farm.

II. 1774—1775. The first year at Sandy-Knowe. In this year, note first his new nurse. The child had a maid sent with him to prevent his being an inconvenience to the family. This maid had left her heart behind her in Edinburgh (ill

trusted),* and went mad in the solitude ;—"tempted by the devil," she told Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, "to kill the child and bury it in the moss."

"Alison instantly took possession of my person," says Scott. And there is no more said of Alison in the autobiography.

But what the old farm-housekeeper must have been to the child, is told in the most finished piece of all the beautiful story of Old Mortality. Among his many beautifully invented names, here is one not invented—very dear to him.

"'I wish to speak an instant with one Alison Wilson, who resides here,' said Henry.

"'She's no at hame the day,' answered Mrs. Wilson in propriâ personâ—the state of whose headdress perhaps inspired her with this direct mode of denying herself—'and ye are but a mislear'd person to speer for her in sic a manner. Ye might have had an M under your belt for Mistress Wilson of Milnwood.'" Read on, if you forget it, to the end, that third chapter of the last volume of Old Mortality. The story of such return to the home of childhood has been told often ; but never, so far as I have knowledge, so exquisitely. I do not doubt that Elphin's name is from Sandy-Knowe also ; but cannot trace it.

Secondly, note his grandfathers' medical treatment of him ; for *both* his grandfathers were physicians,—Dr. Rutherford, as we have seen, so

* Autobiography, p. 15.

professed, by whose advice he is sent to Sandy-Knowe. There, his cattle-dealing grandfather, true physician by diploma of Nature, orders him, whenever the day is fine, to be carried out and laid down beside the old shepherd among the crags or rocks round which he fed his sheep. "The impatience of a child soon inclined me to struggle with my infirmity, and I began by degrees to stand, to walk, and to run. Although the limb affected was much shrunk and contracted, my general health, which was of more importance, was much strengthened by being frequently in the open air; and, in a word, I, *who in a city had probably been condemned to hopeless and helpless decrepitude*, (italics mine,) was now a healthy, high-spirited, and, my lameness apart, a sturdy child,—non sine dis animosus infans."

This, then, is the beginning of Scott's conscious existence,—laid down beside the old shepherd, among the rocks, and among the sheep. "He delighted to roll about in the grass all day long in the midst of the flock, and the sort of fellowship he formed with the sheep and lambs impressed his mind with a degree of affectionate feeling towards them which lasted throughout life." *

Such cradle, and such companionship, Heaven gives its favourite children.

In 1837, two of the then maid-servants of

* His own words to Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, vol. i., p. 83, spoken while Turner was sketching Smailholm Tower, vol. vii., p. 302.

Sandy-Knowe were still living in its neighbourhood; one of them, Tibby Hunter, remembered the child Scott's coming, well. The young ewe-milkers delighted, she says, to carry him about on their backs among the crags; and he was 'very gleg (quick) at the uptak, and soon kenned every sheep and lamb by head-mark as well as any of them.' His great pleasure, however, was in the society of the 'aged hind' recorded in the epistle to Erskine. 'Auld Sandy Ormistoun,' called, from the most dignified part of his function, 'the cow-bailie,' had the chief superintendence of the flocks that browsed upon 'the velvet tufts of loveliest green.' If the child saw him in the morning, he could not be satisfied unless the old man would set him astride on his shoulder, and take him to keep him company, as he lay watching his charge.

"The cow-bailie blew a particular note on his whistle which signified to the maid-servants in the house below when the little boy wished to be carried home again."

"Every sheep and lamb by head-mark;"—that is our first lesson; not an easy one, you will find it, if you try the flock of such a farm. Only yesterday (12th July, 1873,) I saw the dairy of one half-filled with the 'berry-bread' (large flat-baked cakes enclosing layers of gooseberries) prepared by its mistress for her shearers;—the flock being some six or seven hundred, on Coniston Fells.

That is our first lesson, then, very utterly learned "by heart." This is our second, (marginal note

on Sir Walter's copy of Allan Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany, ed. 1724): "This book belonged to my grandfather, Robert Scott, and out of it I was taught 'Hardiknute' by heart before I could read the ballad myself. It was the first poem I ever learnt, the last I shall ever forget."* He repeated a great part of it, in the forests of La Cava, in the spring of the year in which he died; and above the lake Avernus, a piece of the song of the ewe-milkers:—

"Up the craggy mountain, and down the mossy glen,
We canna' go a-milking, for Charlie and his men."

These I say, then, are to be your first lessons. The love, and care, of simplest living creatures; and the remembrance and honour of the dead, with the workmanship for them of fair tombs of song.

The border district of Scotland was at this time, of all districts of the inhabited world, pre-eminently the singing country,—that which most naturally expressed its noble thoughts and passions in song.

The easily traceable reasons for this character

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* The Ballad of Hardiknute is only a fragment—but one consisting of forty-two stanzas of eight lines each. It is the only heroic poem in the Miscellany, of which—and of the poem itself—more hereafter. The first four lines are ominous of Scott's own life:—

"Stately stept he East the wa',
And stately stept he West;
Full seventy years he now had seen,
With scarce seven years of rest."

are, I think, the following; (many exist, of course, untraceably).

First, distinctly pastoral life, giving the kind of leisure which, in all ages and countries, solaces itself with simple music, if other circumstances are favourable,—that is to say, if the summer air is mild enough to allow repose, and the race has imagination enough to give motive to verse.

The Scottish Lowland air is, in summer, of exquisite clearness and softness,—the heat never so great as to destroy energy, and the shepherd's labour not severe enough to occupy wholly either mind or body. A Swiss herd may have to climb a hot ravine for thousands of feet, or cross a difficult piece of ice, to rescue a lamb, or lead his flock to an isolated pasture. But the borderer's sheep-path on the heath is, to his strong frame, utterly without labour or danger: he is free-hearted and free-footed all the summer day long; in winter darkness and snow finding yet enough to make him grave and stout of heart.

Secondly, the soldier's life, passing gradually, not in cowardice or under foreign conquest, but by his own increasing kindness and sense, into that of the shepherd; thus, without humiliation, leaving the war-wounded past to be recalled for its sorrow and its fame.

Thirdly, the extreme sadness of that past itself: giving pathos and awe to all the imagery and power of Nature.

Fourthly, (this a merely physical cause, yet a

very notable one,) the beauty of the sound of Scottish streams.

I know no other waters to be compared with them;—such streams can only exist under very subtle concurrence of rock and climate. There must be much soft rain, not (habitually) tearing the hills down with floods; and the rocks must break irregularly and jaggedly. Our English Yorkshire shales and limestones merely form—carpenter-like—tables and shelves for the rivers to drip and leap from; while the Cumberland and Welsh rocks break too boldly, and lose the multiplied chords of musical sound. Farther, the loosely-breaking rock must contain hard pebbles, to give the level shore of white shingle, through which the brown water may stray wide, in rippling threads. The fords even of English rivers have given the names to half our prettiest towns and villages;—(the difference between ford and bridge curiously—if one may let one's fancy loose for a moment—characterizing the difference between the baptism of literature, and the edification of mathematics, in our two great universities);—but the pure crystal of the Scottish pebbles,* giving the stream its gradations of amber to the edge, and the sound as of "ravishing division to the lute," makes the

* Lockhart, in the extract just below, calls them "milk-white." This is exactly right of the pale bluish translucent quartz, in which the agatescent veins are just traceable, and no more, out of the trap rocks; but the gneissitic hills give also exquisitely brilliant pure white and cream-coloured quartz, rolled out of their vein stones.

Scottish fords the happiest pieces of all one's day walk. "The farmhouse itself was small and poor, with a common kailyard on one flank, and a staring barn of the doctor's ('Douglas') erection on the other; while in front appeared a filthy pond, covered with ducks and duckweed,* from which the whole tenement had derived the unharmonious designation of 'Clarty Hole.' But the Tweed was everything to him: a beautiful river, flowing broad and bright over a bed of milk-white pebbles, unless where, here and there, it darkened into a deep pool, overhung as yet only by the birches and alders which had survived the statelier growth of the primitive forest; and the first hour that he took possession he claimed for his farm the name of the adjoining ford."† With the murmur, whisper, and low fall of these streamlets, unmatched for mystery and sweetness, we must remember also the variable, but seldom wild, thrilling of the wind among the recesses of the glens; and, not least, the need of relief from the monotony of occupations involving some rhythmic measure of the beat of foot or hand, during the long evenings at the hearth-side.

In the rude lines describing such passing of hours quoted by Scott in his introduction to the

* With your pardon, Mr. Lockhart, neither ducks nor duckweed are in the least derogatory to the purity of a pool.

† Vol. ii., p. 358; compare ii., 70. "If it seemed possible to scramble through, he scorned to go ten yards about, and in fact preferred the ford," etc.

Border Minstrelsy,* you find the grandmother spinning, with her stool next the hearth,—"for she was old, and saw right dimly" (firelight, observe, all that was needed even then;) "she spins to make a web of good Scots linen," (can you show such now, from your Glasgow mills?) The father is pulling hemp (or beating it). The only really beautiful piece of song which I heard at Verona, during several months' stay there in 1869, was the low chant of girls unwinding the cocoons of the silk-worm, in the cottages among the olive-clad hills on the north of the city. Never any in the streets of it;—there, only insane shrieks of Republican populace, or senseless dance-music, played by operatic-military bands.

And one of the most curious points connected with the study of Border-life is this connection of its power of song either with its industry or human love, but never with the religious passion of its "Independent" mind. The definite subject of the piper or minstrel being always war or love, (peasant love as much honoured as the proudest), his feeling is steadily antagonistic to Puritanism; and the discordance of Scottish modern psalmody is as unexampled among civilized nations as the sweetness of their ballads—shepherds' or ploughmen's (the plough and pulpit coming into fatalest opposition in Ayrshire); so that Wandering Willie must, as a matter of course, head the troop of Redgauntlet's riotous fishermen with

* 8vo, 1806, p. 119.

"Merrily danced the Quaker's wife." And see Wandering Willie's own description of his gudesire: "A rambling, rattling chiel he had been, in his young days, and could play weel on the pipes;—he was famous at 'Hoopers and Girders;' a' Cumberland could na touch him at 'Jockie Lattin;' and he had the finest finger for the back-lilt between Berwick and Carlisle;—the like o' Steenie was na the sort they made Whigs o'." And yet, to this Puritan element, Scott owed quite one of the most noble conditions of his mental life.

But it is of no use trying to get on to his aunt Janet in this letter, for there is yet one thing I have to explain to you before I can leave you to meditate, to purpose, over that sorrowful piece of Scott's diary with which it began.

If you had before any thoughtful acquaintance with his general character, or with his writings, but had not studied this close of his life, you cannot but have read with surprise, in the piece of the diary I quoted, the recurring sentences showing the deep wounds of his pride. Your impression of him was, if thoughtfully received, that of a man modest and self-forgetful, even to error. Yet, very evidently, the bitterest pain under his fallen fortune is felt by his pride.

Do you fancy the feeling is only by chance so strongly expressed in that passage?

It is dated 18th December. Now read this:—

"*February 5th*, 1826.—Missie was in the drawing-room, and overheard William Clerk and me

laughing excessively at some foolery or other in the back room, to her no small surprise, which she did not keep to herself. But do people suppose that he was less sorry for his poor sister, or I for my lost fortune? If I have a very strong passion in the world, it is pride; and that never hinged upon world's gear, which was always, with me—Light come, light go."

You will not at first understand the tone of this last piece, in which two currents of thought run counter, or, at least, one with a back eddy; and you may think Scott did not know himself, and that his strongest passion was *not* pride; and that he *did* care for world's gear.

Not so, good reader. Never allow your own conceit to betray you into that extremest folly of thinking that you can know a great man better than he knows himself. He may not often wear his heart on his sleeve for you; but when he does, depend upon it, he lets you see deep, and see true.

Scott's ruling passion *was* pride; but it was nobly set—on his honour, and his courage, and his quite conscious intellectual power. The apprehended loss of honour,—the shame of what he thinks in himself cowardice,—or the fear of failure in intellect, are at any time overwhelming to him. But now, he felt that his honour was safe; his courage was, even to himself, satisfying; his sense of intellectual power undiminished; and he had therefore recovered some peace of mind, and power of endurance. The

evils he could not have borne, and lived, have not been inflicted on him, and could not be. He can laugh again with his friend;—"but do people suppose that *he* was less sorry for his poor sister, or I for my lost fortune?"

What is this loss, then, which he *is* grieving for —as for a lost sister? Not world's gear, "which was always, with me, Light come, light go."

Something far other than that.

Read but these three short sentences more,* out of the entries in December and January:—

"My heart clings to the place I have created: there is scarce a tree on it that does not owe its being to me."

"Poor Will Laidlaw—poor Tom Purdie—such news will wring your hearts; and many a poor fellow besides, to whom my prosperity was daily bread."

"I have walked my last on the domains I have planted, sate the last time in the halls I have built. But death would have taken them from me if misfortune had spared them.—My poor people, whom I loved so well!"

Nor did they love him less. You know that his house was left to him, and that his "poor people" served him until his death—or theirs. Hear now *how* they served.

"The butler," says Lockhart, visiting Abbotsford in 1827, "instead of being the easy chief of a

* Vol. vii., pp. 164, 166, 196.

large establishment, was now doing half the work of the house, at probably half his former wages. Old Peter, who had been for five-and-twenty years a dignified coachman, was now ploughman-in-ordinary, only putting his horses to the carriage upon high and rare occasions; and so on with all the rest that remained of the ancient train. And all, to my view, seemed happier than they had ever done before. Their good conduct had given every one of them a new elevation in his own mind; and yet their demeanour had gained, in place of losing, in simple humility of observance. The great loss was that of William Laidlaw, for whom (the estate being all but a fragment in the hands of the trustees and their agent) there was now no occupation here. The cottage which his taste had converted into a loveable retreat had found a rent-paying tenant; and he was living a dozen miles off, on the farm of a relation in the Vale of Yarrow. Every week, however, he came down to have a ramble with Sir Walter over their old haunts, to hear how the pecuniary atmosphere was darkening or brightening, and to read, in every face at Abbotsford, that it could never be itself again until circumstances should permit his re-establishment at Kaeside.

"All this warm and respectful solicitude must have had a preciously soothing influence on the mind of Scott, who may be said to have lived upon love. No man cared less about popular admiration and applause; but for the least chill on the

affection of any near and dear to him, he had the sensitiveness of a maiden. I cannot forget, in particular, how his eyes sparkled when he first pointed out to me Peter Mathieson guiding the plough on the haugh. 'Egad,' said he, 'auld Pepe' (this was the children's name for their good friend), 'auld Pepe's whistling at his darg. The honest fellow said a yoking in a deep field would do baith him and the blackies good. If things get round with me, easy shall be Pepe's cushion.'"

You see there is not the least question about striking for wages on the part of Sir Walter's servants. The law of supply and demand is not consulted, nor are their wages determined by the great principle of competition—so rustic and absurd are they; not but that they take it on them sometimes to be masters instead of servants:—

"*March* 21.—Wrote till twelve, then out upon the heights, and faced the gale bravely. Tom Purdie was not with me; *he would have obliged me to keep the sheltered ground.*"*

You are well past all that kind of thing, you think, and know better how to settle the dispute between Capital and Labour.

"What has that to do with domestic servants?" do you ask? You think a house with a tall chimney, and two or three hundred servants in it, is not properly a house at all; that the sacred words, Domus, Duomo, cannot be applied to it; and that

* Vol. vii., p. 9.

Giotto would have refused to build a Buzzing Tower, by way of belfry, in Lancashire?

Well, perhaps you are right. If you are merely unlucky Williams—borrowing colossal planes—instead of true servants, it may well be that Pepe's *own* whistling at his darg must be very impossible for you, only manufactured whistling any more possible. Which are you? Which *will* you be?

I am afraid there is little doubt which you are;—but there is no doubt whatever which you would like to be, whether you know your own minds or not. You will never whistle at your dargs more, unless you are serving masters whom you can love. You may shorten your hours of labour as much as you please;—no minute of them will be merry, till you are serving truly: that is to say, until the bond of constant relationship—service to death—is again established between your masters and you. It has been broken by their sin, but may yet be recovered by your virtue. All the best of you cling to the least remnant or shadow of it. I heard but the other day of a foreman, in a large house of business, discharged at a week's warning on account of depression in trade,—who thereupon went to one of the partners, and showed him a letter which he had received a year before, offering him a situation with an increase of his salary by more than a third; which offer he had refused without so much as telling his masters of its being made to him, that he might stay in the old house. He was a Scotchman —and I am glad to tell the story of his fidelity with

that of Pepe and Tom Purdie. I know not how it may be in the south; but I know that in Scotland, and the northern border, there still remains something of the feeling which fastened the old French word "loial" among the dearest and sweetest of their familiar speech; and that there are some souls yet among them, who, alike in labour or in rest, abide in, or will depart to, the Land of the Leal.

"*Sire, moult me plaist vostre escole*
Et vo noble conseil loial,
Ne du trespasser n'ay entente;
Sans lui n'aray ne bien ne mal.
Amours ce vouloir me présente,

Qui veult que tout mon appareil
Soit mis à servir soir et main
Loiauté, et moult me merveil
Comment homs a le cuer si vain
Qu'il a à fausseté réclaim."

LETTER XXXIII

AUNT JESSIE

I FIND some of my readers are more interested in the last two numbers of Fors than I want them to be.

"Give up your Fors altogether, and let us have a life of Scott," they say.

They must please to remember that I am only examining the conditions of the life of this wise man, that they may learn how to rule their own lives, or their children's, or their servants'; and, for the present, with this particular object, that they may be able to determine, for themselves, whether ancient sentiment, or modern common sense, is to be the rule of life, and of service.

I beg them, therefore, to refer constantly to that summary of modern common sense given by Mr. Applegarth, at the meeting of the Social Science Association, and quoted with due commendation by the *Pall Mall Gazette* of July 6th, 1868.

"One piece of vigorous good sense enlivened the discussion. It was uttered by Mr. Applegarth, who observed that 'no sentiment ought to be brought into the subject.'"

No sentiment, you observe, is to be brought into your doing, or your whistling, according to Mr. Applegarth.

And the main purpose of Fors is to show you that there is, sometimes, in weak natural whistling quite as much virtue as in vigorous steam whistling. But it cannot show you this without explaining what your darg, or 'doing,' *is;* which cannot be shown merely by writing pleasant biographies. You are always willing enough to *read* lives, but never willing to *lead* them. For instance, those few sentences, almost casually given in last Fors, about the Scottish rivers, have been copied, I see, into various journals, as if they, at any rate, were worth extract from the much useless matter of my books. Scotchmen like to hear their rivers talked about, it appears! But when last I was up Huntly Burn way, there was no burn there. It had all been drawn off to somebody's 'works;' and it is painful for me, as an author, to reflect that, "of all polluting liquids belonging to this category (liquid refuse from manufactories), the discharges from paper works are the most difficult to deal with." *

At Edinburgh there is a railroad station instead of the North Loch; the Water of Leith is—well, one cannot say in civilized company what it is; † and at Linlithgow, of all the palaces so fair,—built for a royal dwelling, etc.,—the oil, (paraffin), floating on

* Fourth Report of Rivers Pollution Commission, p. 52.

† See Analysis of Water of Leith, the Foul Burn, and Pow Burn, same Report, p. 21.

the streams, can be ignited, burning with a large flame.*

My good Scottish friends, had you not better leave off pleasing yourselves with descriptions of your rivers as they were, and consider what your rivers are to be? For I correct my derivation of Clarty Hole too sorrowfully.† It is the *Ford* that is clarty now—not the Hole.

To return to our sentimental work, however, for a while. I left in my last letter one or two of the most interesting points in the first year at Sandy-Knowe unnoticed, because I thought it best to give you, by comparison with each other, some idea of the three women who, as far as education could do it, formed the mind of Scott. His masters only polished and directed it. His mother, grandmother, and aunt welded the steel.

Hear first this of his mother. (Lockhart, vol. i., p. 78.)

"She had received, as became the daughter of an eminently learned physician, the best sort of education then bestowed on young gentlewomen in Scotland. The poet, speaking of Mrs. Euphemia Sinclair, the mistress of the school at which his mother was reared, to the ingenious local antiquary, Mr. Robert Chambers, said that 'she must have been possessed of uncommon talents for education, as all her young ladies were, in after-life, fond of

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* Same Report; so also the River Almond, pp. 22—45.

† Formerly Cartley Hole; see below, p. 210.

reading, wrote and spelled admirably, were well acquainted with history and the belles lettres, without neglecting the more homely duties of the needle and accompt-book, and perfectly well-bred in society.' Mr. Chambers adds, 'Sir Walter further communicated that his mother, and many others of Mrs. Sinclair's pupils, were sent afterwards *to be finished off* by the Honourable Mrs. Ogilvie, a lady who trained her young friends to a style of manners which would now be considered intolerably stiff. Such was the effect of this early training upon the mind of Mrs. Scott, that even when she approached her eightieth year, she took as much care to avoid touching her chair with her back, as if she had still been under the stern eye of Mrs. Ogilvie.'"

You are to note in this extract three things. First, the singular influence of education, given by a master or mistress of real power. "All her young ladies" (*all*, Sir Walter! do you verily mean this?) "fond of reading," and so forth.

Well, I believe that, with slight exception, Sir Walter *did* mean it. He seldom wrote, or spoke, in careless generalization. And I doubt not that it is truly possible, by first insisting on a girl's really knowing how to read, and then by allowing her very few books, and those absolutely wholesome,—and not amusing!—to give her a healthy appetite for reading. Spelling, I had thought was impossible to many girls; but perhaps this is only because it is not early enough made a point of: it cannot be learned late.

Secondly: I wish Mr. Chambers had given us Sir Walter's words, instead of only the substance of what he "further communicated." But you may safely gather what I want you to notice, that Sir Walter attributes the essentials of good breeding to the first careful and scholarly mistress; and only the formality, which he somewhat hesitatingly approves, to the finishing hand of Mrs. Ogilvie. He would have paid less regard to the opinion of modern society on such matters, had he lived to see our languid Paradise of sofas and rocking-chairs. The beginning, and very nearly the end, of bodily education for a girl, is to make sure that she can stand, and sit, upright; the ankle vertical, and firm as a marble shaft; the waist elastic as a reed, and as unfatiguable. I have seen my own mother travel from sunrise to sunset, in a summer's day, without once leaning back in the carriage.

Thirdly: The respectability belonging in those days to the profession of a schoolmistress. In fact, I do not myself think that any old lady *can* be respectable, unless she *is* one, whether she be paid for her pupils or not. And to deserve to be one, makes her Honourable at once, titled or untitled.

This much comes, then, of the instructions of Mrs. Sinclair and Mrs. Ogilvie; and why should not all your daughters be educated by Honourable Mrs. Ogilvies, and learn to spell, and to sit upright? Then they will all have sons like Sir Walter Scott, you think?

Not so, good friends. Miss Rutherford had not wholly learned to sit upright from Mrs. Ogilvie. She had some disposition of her own in that kind, different from the other pupils, and taught in older schools. Look at the lines in the Lay, where Conrad of Wolfenstein,

> "In humour highly crossed
> About some steeds his band had lost,
> High words to words succeeding still,
> Smote with his gauntlet stout Hunthill;
> A hot and hardy Rutherford,
> Whom men call Dickon Draw-the-Sword.
> Stern Rutherford right little said,
> But bit his glove, and shook his head.—
> A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
> Stout Conrad, cold and drenched in blood,
> His bosom gored with many a wound,
> Was by a woodman's lyme-dog * found;
> Unknown the manner of his death,
> Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath;
> But ever from that time, 'twas said
> That Dickon wore a Cologne blade."

Such the race,—such the school education,—of Scott's mother. Of her home education, you may judge by what she herself said of her father to her son's tutor, (whose exquisitely grotesque letter, for the rest, vol. I., p. 108,) which is alone enough to explain Scott's inevitable future perception of the weakness of religious egotism.

"Mrs. Scott told me that, when prescribing for his patients, it was Dr. Rutherford's custom to offer up,

* Blood-hound, from 'lym,' Saxon for leash.

at the same time, a prayer for the accompanying blessing of heaven,—a laudable practice, in which, I fear, he has not been generally imitated by those of his profession."

A very laudable practice indeed, good Mr. Mitchell; perhaps even a useful and practically efficacious one, on occasion; at all events one of the last remains of noble Puritanism, in its sincerity, among men of sound learning.

For Dr. Rutherford was also an excellent linguist, and, according to the custom of the times, delivered his prelections to the students in Latin, (like the conversation in Beardie's Jacobite Club). Nowadays, you mean to have no more Latin talked, as I understand; no prayers said. Pills—Morison's and others—can be made up on cheaper terms, you think,—and be equally salutary?

Be it so. In these ancient manners, however, Scott's mother is brought up, and consistently abides; doubtless, having some reverence for the Latin tongue, and much faith in the medicine of prayer:—having had troubles about her soul's safety also; perhaps too solicitous, at one time, on that point; but being sure she has a soul to be solicitous about, which is much; obedient herself to the severest laws of morality and life; mildly and steadily enforcing them on her children; but naturally of light and happy temper, and with a strong turn to study poetry and works of imagination.

I do not say anything of his father till we come

to the apprenticeship,—except only that he was no less devout than his mother, and more formal. Of training which could be known or remembered, neither he nor the mother gives any to their boy until after the Sandy-Knowe time. But how of the unremembered training? When do you suppose the education of a child begins? At six months old it can answer smile with smile, and impatience with impatience. It can observe, enjoy, and suffer, acutely, and, in a measure, intelligently. Do you suppose it makes no difference to it that the order of the house is perfect and quiet, the faces of its father and mother full of peace, their soft voices familiar to its ear, and even those of strangers, loving; or that it is tossed from arm to arm, among hard, or reckless, or vain-minded persons, in the gloom of a vicious household, or the confusion of a gay one? The moral disposition is, I doubt not, greatly determined in those first speechless years. I believe especially that quiet, and the withdrawal of objects likely to distract, by amusing, the child, so as to let it fix its attention undisturbed on every visible least thing in its domain, is essential to the formation of some of the best powers of thought. It is chiefly to this quietude of his own home that I ascribe the intense perceptiveness and memory of the three-years'-old child at Sandy-Knowe; for, observe, it is in that first year he learns his Hardiknute; by his aunt's help he learns to read at Bath, and can cater for himself on his return. Of this aunt, and her mother, we must now know what we

can. You notice the difference which Scott himself indicates between the two: "My grandmother, who was meekness itself, and my aunt, who was of a higher temper." Yet his grandmother, Barbara Haliburton, was descended from the so-called, in speciality of honour, 'Standard-bearer' of the Douglases; and Dryburgh Abbey was part of her family's estate, they having been true servants to the monks of it, once on a time. Here is a curious little piece of lecture on the duties of master and servant,—Royal Proclamation on the 8th of May, 1535, by James the Fifth:* "Whereas we, having been advised, and knowing the said gentlemen, the Halliburtons, to be *leal* and *true* honest men, long servants unto the saide abbeye, for the saide landis, stout men at armes, and goode borderers against Ingland; and doe therefore decree and ordaine, that they shall be re-possess'd, and bruik and enjoy the landis and steedings they had of the said abbeye, paying the use and wonte: and that they sall be goode servants to the said venerabil father, like as they and their predecessours were to the said venerabil father, and his predecessours, and he a good master to them." The Abbot of Dryburgh, however, and others in such high places, having thus misread their orders, and taken on themselves to be masters instead of ministers, the Reformation took its course; and Dryburgh claims allegiance no more—but to its dead.

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* Introduction to Border Minstrelsy, p. 86.

You notice the phrase, "good borderers against England." Lest I should have to put it off too long, I may as well, in this place, let you know the origin of the tune which Scott's uncle was so fond of. From the letter of one of his friends to Dr. Brown I gratefully take the following passage:—

"In the fourteenth century some English riders were slaking their thirst on the banks of the Tweed, nearly opposite Cartley Hole,—now Abbotsford, —where wild plums grew. The borderers came down upon them unexpectedly, and annihilated them, driving some into the Tweed, at a place called the Englishman's Dyke. The borderers accordingly thought their surprise sourer fruit to the invaders than the plums they went to pluck, and christened themselves by the soubriquet of 'Sour Plums in Galashiels,' which gave a text for the song and tune, and a motto for the arms of the town of Galashiels."

There is something to think of for you, when next you see the blackthorn blow, or the azure bloom spread on its bossed clusters of fruit. I cannot find any of the words of the song; but one beautiful stanza of the ballad of Cospatrick may at least serve to remind you of the beauty of the Border in its summer time:—

> "For to the greenwood I maun gae
> To pu' the red rose and the slae,
> To pu' the red rose and the thyme,
> To deck my mother's bour and mine."

"Meekness itself," and yet possibly with some

pride in her also, this Barbara, with the ruins of her Dryburgh still seen grey above the woods, from the tower at whose foot her grandchild was playing. So short the space he had to travel, when his lameness should be cured,—the end of all travel already in sight!

Some pride in her, perhaps: you need not be surprised her grandchild should have a little left.

"Many a tale" (she told him) "of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood (Oakwood), Jamie Tellfer of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes —merry men, all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John. A more recent hero, but not of less note, was the celebrated De'il of Little Dean, whom she well remembered, as he had married her mother's sister. Of this extraordinary person I learned many a story—grave and gay, comic and warlike"—(dearest, meek, grandmamma!)

"Two or three old books which lay in the window-seat were explored for my amusement in the tedious winter days. Automathes* and Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany were my favourites, although, at a later period, an odd volume of Josephus's Wars of the Jews divided my partiality."

"Two or three old books in the window-seat," and

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* "The Capacity and Extent of the Human Understanding; exemplified in the extraordinary case of Automathes, a young nobleman who was accidentally left in his infancy upon a desolate island, and continued nineteen years in that solitary state, separate from all human society." By John Kirkby. 1745. Small 8vo.

"an odd volume of Josephus." How entertaining our farm library! (with the Bible, you observe;) and think how much matters have changed for the better: your package down from Mudie's monthly with all the new magazines, and a dozen of novels; Good Words—as many as you choose,—and Professor Tyndall's last views on the subject of the Regelation of Ice.

Nay — with your professional information that when ice breaks you can stick it together again, you have also imaginative literature of the rarest. Here—instead of Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany, with its Hardiknute and other ballads of softer tendency,—some of them not the best of their kind, I admit,—here you have Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, M.P.'s, Tales at Tea-time, dedicated to the schoolroom teapot, in which the first story is of the "Pea Green Nose," and in which (opening at random) I find it related of some Mary of our modern St. Mary's Lochs, that "Mary stepped forward hastily, when one of the lobsters sprang forward, and seized her arm in his claw, saying, in a low, agitated, tone of voice," etc., etc.

You were better off, little as you think it, with that poor library on the window-seat. Your own, at worst, though much fingered and torn; —your own mentally, still more utterly; and though the volume be odd, do you think that, by any quantity of reading, you can make your knowledge of history, even?

You are so proud at having learned to read too,

and I warrant you could not read so much as Barbara Haliburton's shield: Or, on a bend azure, three mascles of the first; in the second quarter a buckle of the second. I meant to have engraved it, but shall never get on to aunt Jessie at this rate.

"My kind and affectionate aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose memory will ever be dear to me, used to read these works to me, with admirable patience, until I could repeat long passages by heart."

Why admirable, Sir Walter? Surely she might have spent her time more usefully—lucratively at least—than in this manner of 'nursing the baby.' Might you not have been safely left, to hunt up Hardiknute, in maturer years, for yourself?

By no manner of means, Sir Walter thinks; and justly. With all his gifts, but for this aunt Janet, —for his mother,—and for Lilias Redgauntlet,— he had assuredly been only hunting laird, and the best story-teller in the Lothians.

We scarcely ever, in our study of education, ask this most essential of all questions about a man, What *patience* had his mother or sister with him?

And most men are apt to forget it themselves. Pardon me for speaking of myself for a moment; (if I did not know things by my own part in them, I would not write of them at all). You know that people sometimes call me a good writer: others like to hear me speak. I seldom mis-spell or

mis-pronounce a word, grossly; and can generally say what I want to say. Well, my own impression about this power, such as it may be, is that it was born with me, or gradually gained by my own study. It is only by deliberate effort that I recall the long morning hours of toil, as regular as sunrise,—toil on both sides equal,—by which, year after year, my mother forced me to learn all the Scotch paraphrases by heart, and ever so many chapters of the Bible besides, (the eighth of 1st Kings being one,—try it, good reader, in a leisure hour!) allowing not so much as a syllable to be missed or misplaced; while every sentence was required to be said over and over again till she was satisfied with the accent of it. I recollect a struggle between us of about three weeks, concerning the accent of the "of" in the lines

> "Shall any following spring revive
> The ashes of the urn?"

I insisting, partly in childish obstinacy, and partly in true instinct for rhythm, (being wholly careless on the subject both of urns and their contents,) on reciting it, "The ashes *of* the urn." It was not, I say, till after three weeks' labour, that my mother got the accent laid upon the ashes, to her mind. But had it taken three years, she would have done it, having once undertaken to do it. And, assuredly, had she not done it, I had been simply an avaricious picture collector, or perhaps even a more avaricious money collector, to this day; and had she done it

wrongly, no after-study would ever have enabled me to read so much as a single line of verse.

It is impossible, either in history or biography, to arrange what one wants to insist upon wholly by time, or wholly by rational connection. You must observe that the visit to England, of which I am now going to speak, interrupts, with a brilliant display of pyrotechnic light, the steady burning of the stars above Scott's childhood. From the teaching of his aunt, *before* he could read, I should like, for several reasons, to go on at once to the teaching of his mother, *after* he could read; but I must content myself, for the moment, with adding the catalogue of mamma's library to that of aunt Jessie's. On the window-seat of Sandy-Knowe—only to be got at the pith of by help of auntie—we had the odd volume of Josephus, Automathes, and two or three old books not named. A year later, mamma provides for us—now scholars ourselves—Pope's Homer, Allan Ramsay's Evergreen, and, for Sundays, Bunyan, Gesner's Death of Abel, and Rowe's (Mrs.) Letters from the Other World. But we have made our grand tour in the meantime, and have some new ideas of *this* world in our head; of which the reader must now consider.

"I was in my fourth year when my father was advised that the Bath waters might be of some advantage to my lameness. My affectionate aunt —although such a journey promised to a person of her retired habits anything but pleasure or amusement—undertook as readily to accompany me to

the wells of Bladud, as if she had expected all the delight that ever the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient visitants."

And why should she not? Does it not seem somewhat strange to you, from what you know of young, or even middle-aged, aunt Jessies of the present day, that Miss Scott should look upon the journey to Bath as so severe a piece of self-denial; and that her nephew regards her doing so as a matter of course?

How old was aunt Jessie, think you? Scott's father, the eldest of a large family, was born in 1729,—in this year, therefore, was forty-six. If we uncharitably suppose Miss Jessie the next oldest, she would be precisely of the age of Mrs. Tabitha Bramble; and one could fancy her, it seems to me, on the occasion of this unforeseen trip to the most fashionable watering place in England, putting up her "rose-collard neglegay with green robins, and her bloo quilted petticot," without feeling herself in the position of a martyr led to the stake. But aunt Jessie must really have been much younger than Mrs. Tabitha, and have had the advantage of her in other particulars besides spelling. She was afterwards married, and when Lockhart saw her (1820?) —forty years or so after this—had still "the softest eye and the sweetest voice." And from the thatched mansion of the moorland, Miss Jessie feels it so irksome and solemn a duty—does she?—to go to "the squares, the circus, and the parades, which put *you*" (Miss Lydia Melford) "in mind of the

sumptuous palaces represented in prints and pictures; and the new buildings, such as Prince's Row, Harlequin's Row, Bladud's Row, and twenty other rows besides,"—not to speak of a real pump in a pump-room, with a handle to it, and other machinery, instead of the unpumped Tweed!

Her nephew, however, judges her rightly. Aunt Jessie could give him no truer proof of faithful affection than in the serenity with which she resolves to take him to this centre of gaiety.

Whereupon, you are to note this, that the end of all right education for a woman is to make her love her home better than any other place; that she should as seldom leave it as a queen her queendom; nor ever feel entirely at rest but within its threshold.

For her boy, however, there are things to be seen in Bath, and to be learned. "I acquired the rudiments of reading from an old dame near our lodgings, and I had never a more regular teacher, though I think I did not attend her more than a quarter of a year. An occasional lesson from my aunt supplied the rest." Yes, little Walter. If we indeed have a mind to our book, that is all the teaching we want; we shall perhaps get through a volume or two in time.

"The circumstances I recollect of my residence in Bath are but trifling; yet I never recall them without a feeling of pleasure. The beauties of the Parade (which of them I know not), with the river Avon winding around it, and the lowing of

the cattle from the opposite hills, are warm in my recollection, and are only rivalled by the splendours of a toy-shop somewhere near the Orange Grove. I had acquired, I know not by what means, a kind of superstitious terror for statuary of all kinds. No ancient Iconoclast or modern Calvinist could have looked on the outside of the Abbey Church (if I mistake not the principal church at Bath is so called,) with more horror than the image of Jacob's Ladder, with all its angels, presented to my infant eye. My uncle * effectually combated my terrors, and formally introduced me to a statue of Neptune, which perhaps still keeps guard at the side of the Avon, where a pleasure-boat crosses to Spring Gardens."

"A sweet retreat"—Spring Gardens (again I quote Miss Lydia)—"laid out in walks, and ponds, and parterres of flowers, and hard by the Pump-room is a coffee-house for the ladies, but my aunt says young girls are not admitted, inasmuch as the conversation turns upon politics, scandal, philosophy, and other subjects above our capacity." Is aunt Janet old enough and clever enough for the company, I wonder? And Walter—what toys did he mostly covet in the Orange Grove?

The passage about the effect of sculpture upon him is intensely interesting to me, partly as an indication of the state of his own nascent imagination,

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* Robert, who comes to visit them in Bath, to little Walter's great joy.

partly as illustrative of the power of religious sculpture, *meant* to terrify, on the minds of peasant children of high faculty. But I cannot dwell on this point here: I must get on to his first sight of a play. The Third Fors—still favourable to him—appoints it to be "As you like it."

A never-to-be-forgotten delight, influencing him in his whole nature thenceforward. It is uncle Robert's doing this, aunt Jessie having probably been doubtful on the matter, but irresistibly coaxed. Uncle Robert has much to answer for! How much, I can't tell you to-day; nor for a while now, for I have other matters on hand in the next Fors or two—I must not let you forget the broom-market between Berne and Thun; and I've got to finish my notes on Friedrich and his father, who take more noticing than I expected; besides that I've Friedrich II. of Germany to give some account of; and all my Oxford work besides. I can only again and again beg the many valued correspondents whose letters I must abruptly answer, to remember that not one word on any of these subjects can be set down without care; and to consider what the length of a day is, under existing solar arrangements.

Meantime, here is a point for you to think of. The boy interrupts the first scene of the play by crying aloud "An't they brothers?"—(the Third Fors had appointed for him that one day he should refuse to speak to his own;)—and long remembers the astonishment with which he "looked upon the

apathy of the elder part of our company, who, having the means, did not spend every evening at the theatre."

How was it that he never could write a Play?

My Scottish readers must not suppose I mean that the treatment of rivers is worse in North than in South Britain,—only they have prettier streams in Scotland to float their paraffin, or other beautiful productions of modern art, or nature, on the top of. We had one or two clear streams in Surrey, indeed; but as I was investigating the source of one of them, only the other day, I found a police office had been built over it, and that the authorities had paid five hundred pounds to construct a cesspool, with a huge iron cylinder conducting to it, through the spring. Excavating, I found the fountain running abundantly, *round* the pipe.

The following paragraph, and the two subjoined letters, appeared in the same impression of the *Daily Telegraph*, on the 12th January, 1871. I wish to preserve them in Fors; and I print them in this number, because the succession of the first four names in the statement of the journal, associated with that of the first magistrate of the City of London, in connection with the business in hand that day, is to me the most pleasant piece of reading—and I think must be to all of us among the most significant—that has lately met our eyes in a public print; and it means such new solemn league and covenant as Scott had been fain to see. My letter about the Italian streams may well follow what I have said of Scottish ones.

The French Appeal to England.

"We are happy to announce further contributions to the fund which is being raised in response to the appeal of the Bishop of Versailles and the clergy of the Seine-et-Oise department; and also to state that, in addition to those influential persons whom we named yesterday as being ready to serve on a committee, two other gentlemen of high official and social position have consented to join the body. The list at present is as follows: The Lord Bishop of London; Dr. Manning, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster; the Rev. Dr. Brock, the Baptist minister; Mr. Alfred de Rothschild; and the Lord Mayor, who has courteously placed the Mansion House at the service of the committee. Besides these names, the members of the 'Paris Food Fund,' as will be seen from the subjoined letter, propose to join the more comprehensive organization.

To the Editor of the Daily Telegraph.

"Sir,—Acting on your suggestion that the 'Paris Food Fund,' which I yesterday described to you, might be advantageously united with that which has been suggested by the Bishop of Versailles, I beg to say that Archbishop Manning, Professor Huxley, Sir John Lubbock, and Mr. Ruskin will, with myself, have great pleasure in forming part of such a public committee as you have advised, and in placing the subscriptions already sent to us at its disposal.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"Jan. 11. "James T. Knowles."

Daily Telegraph, Jan. 12, 1871.

Roman Inundations.

To the Editor of the Daily Telegraph.

"Sir,—May I ask you to add to your article on the inundation of the Tiber some momentary invitation to your readers to think with Horace rather than to smile with him?

"In the briefest and proudest words he wrote of himself, he thought of his native land chiefly as divided into the two districts of violent and scanty waters:

> Dicar, qua violens obstrepit Aufidus,
> Et qua, pauper aquæ, Daunus agrestium
> Regnavit populorum.

"Now the anger and power of that *tauriformis Aufidus* is precisely because *regna Dauni præfluit*—because it flows *past* the poor kingdoms which it should enrich. Stay it there, and it is treasure instead of ruin. And so also with Tiber and Eridanus. They are so much gold, at their sources,—they are so much death, if they once break down unbridled into the plains.

"At the end of your report of the events of the inundation, it is said that the King of Italy expressed 'an earnest desire to do something, as far as science and industry could effect it, to prevent or mitigate inundations for the future.'

"Now, science and industry can do, not 'something,' but everything; and not merely to mitigate inundations —and, deadliest of inundations, because perpetual—maremmas; but to change them into national banks instead of debts.

"The first thing the King of any country has to do is to manage the streams of it.

"If he can manage the streams, he can also the people; for the people also form alternately torrent and maremma, in pestilential fury or pestilential idleness. They also will change into living streams of men, if their Kings literally 'lead them forth beside the waters of comfort.' Half the money lost by this inundation of Tiber, spent rightly on the hill-sides last summer, would have changed every wave of it into so much fruit and foliage in spring, where now there will be only burning rock. And the men who have been killed within the last two months, and whose work, and the money spent in doing it, have filled Europe with misery which fifty years will not efface, had they been set at the same cost to do good instead of evil, and to save life instead of destroy it, might, by this 10th of January, 1871, have embanked every dangerous stream at the roots of the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Po, and left to Germany, to France, and to Italy an inheritance of blessing for centuries to come—they and their families living all the while in brightest happiness and peace. And now! Let the Red Prince look to it; red inundation bears also its fruit in time.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"Jan. 10. "JOHN RUSKIN."

Daily Telegraph, Jan. 12, 1871.

SUNDAY PLAYTHINGS

The Superbe Suisse and his Bear

LETTER XXXIV

LA DOUCE DAME

"*Love, it is a wrathful peace,*
A free acquittance, without release,
And truth with falsehood all a-fret,
And fear within secureness set;
In heart it is despairing hope;
And full of hope, it is vain hope.
Wise madness and wild reasonne,
And sweet danger, wherein to droune.
A heavy burden, light to bear;
A wicked way, away to wear.
It is discordance that can accord,
And accordance to discord;
It is cunning without science,
Wisdom without sapience,
Wit without discretion,
Having, without possession.
And health full of malady,
And charity full of envy,
And restraint full of abundance,
And a greedy suffisaunce.
Delight right full of heaviness,
And drearihood, full of gladness;
Bitter sweetness, and sweet error,
Right evil savoured good savour;
Sin, that pardon hath within,
And pardon, spotted outside with sin:
A pain also it is joyous,
And cruelty, right piteous;

A strength weak to stand upright,
And feebleness full of might;
Wit unadvised, sage follie,
And joy full of tormentry.
A laughter it is, weeping aye;
Rest, that travaileth night and day;
Also a sweet Hell it is,
*And a sorrowful Paradise;**
A pleasant gaol, and an easy prison,
And full of froste, summer season;
Prime-time, full of froste's white,
And May devoid of all delight."

* * * * * *

"*Mesment de ceste amour*
Li plus sages n'y sceunt tour
Maiz ou entent je te diray
Une aût (*autre*) *amour te descriray*
De celle veuil je que pour t'ame
Tu aimes la tres-doulce dame.
Si com dist la ste escripture
Amours est fors, amours est dure,
Amours soustient, amours endure,
Amours revient, et tousjours dure;
Amours met en amer sa cure;
Amours loyal, amours seure
Sert, et de servise n'a cure.
Amours fait de propre commun,
Amours fait de deux cuers un;
Amours enchace, ce me semble,
Amours rent cuers, amours les emble,
Amours despiece, amours refait,
Amours fait paix, amours fait plait,
Amours fait bel, amours fait lait,
Toutes heure quant il lui plaist
Amours attrait, amours estrange
Amours fait de prive estrange;
Amours seurprent, amours emprent,
Amours reprent, amours esprent,

Il n'est riens qu'amours ne face;
Amours tolt cuer, amours tolt grace,
Amours delie, amours enlace,
Amours ocist, amours efface,
Amours ne craint ne pic ne mace:
Amours fist Dieu venir en place,
Amours lui fist ûre (notre) char prendre,
Amours le fist devenir mendre,
Amours le fist en la croix pendre,
Amours le fist illec extendre,
Amours le fist le coste fendre,
Amours le fist les maulx reprendre,
Amours lui fist les bons aprendre,
Amours le fist a nous venir,
Amours nous fait a lui tenir."

These descriptions of the two kinds of noble love are both given in the part of the Romance of the Rose which was written by Jean de Meung.* Chaucer translated the first, and I have partly again translated his translation into more familiar English. I leave the original French of the other for you to work at, if ever you care to learn French;—the first is all that I want you to read just now; but they should not be separated, being among the most interesting expressions extant of the sentiment of the dark ages, which Mr. Applegarth is desirous of eliminating from modern business.

The two great loves,—that of husband and wife, representing generally the family affections, and that of mankind, to which, at need, the family affection must be sacrificed,—include, rightly understood, all

* Or Méhun, near Beaugency, Loire.

the noble sentiments of humanity. Modern philosophy supposes these conditions of feeling to have been always absurd, and at present, happily, nearly extinct; and that the only proper, or, in future, possible, motives of human action are the three wholly unsentimental desires,—the lust of the flesh, (hunger, thirst, and sexual passion), the lust of the eyes, (covetousness), and the pride of life, (personal vanity).

Thus, in a recent debate on the treatment of Canada,* Sir C. Adderley deprecates the continuance of a debate on a question "purely sentimental." I doubt if Sir C. Adderley knew in the least what was meant by a sentimental question. It is a purely "sentimental question," for instance, whether Sir C. Adderley shall, or shall not, eat his mother, instead of burying her. Similarly, it is a purely sentimental question, whether, in the siege of Samaria, the mother who boiled her son and ate him, or the mother who hid her son, was best fulfilling her duty to society. Similarly, the relations of a colony to its mother-country, in their truth and depth, are founded on purely parental and filial instincts, which may be either sentimental or bestial, but *must* be one or the other. Sir Charles probably did not know that the discussion of every such

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* On Mr. M'Fie's motion for a committee to consider the relations that subsist between the United Kingdom and the Colonies. On the varieties of filial sentiment, compare Herodotus, iii. 38; iv. 26.

question must therefore be either sentimental *or* bestial.

Into one or other, then, of these two forms of sentiment, conjugal and family love, or compassion, all human happiness, properly so called, resolves itself; but the spurious or counter-happiness of lust, covetousness, and vanity being easily obtained, and naturally grasped at, instead, may altogether occupy the lives of men, without ever allowing them to know what happiness means.

But in the use I have just made of the word 'compassion,' I mean something very different from what is usually understood by it. Compassion is the Latin form of the Greek word 'sympathy'—the English for both is 'fellow-feeling'; and the condition of delight in characters higher than our own is more truly to be understood by the word 'compassion' than the pain of pity for those inferior to our own; but in either case, the imaginative understanding of the natures of others, and the power of putting ourselves in their place, is the faculty on which the virtue depends. So that an unimaginative person can neither be reverent nor kind. The main use of works of fiction, and of the drama, is to supply, as far as possible, the defect of this imagination in common minds. But there is a curious difference in the nature of these works themselves, dependent on the degree of imaginative power of the writers, which I must at once explain, else I can neither answer for you my own question put in last 'Fors,' why Scott could not write a play,

nor show you, which is my present object, the real nature of sentiment.

Do you know, in the first place, what a play is? or what a poem is? or what a novel is? That is to say, do you know the perpetual and necessary distinctions in literary aim which have brought these distinctive names into use? You had better first, for clearness' sake, call all the three 'poems,' for all the three are so, when they are good, whether written in verse or prose. All truly imaginative account of man is poetic; but there are three essential kinds of poetry,—one dramatic, one lyric, and one epic.

Dramatic poetry is the expression by the poet of other people's feelings, his own not being told.

Lyric poetry is the expression by the poet of his own feelings.

Epic poetry is account given by the poet of other people's external circumstances, and of events happening to them, with only such expression either of their feelings, or his own, as he thinks may be conveniently added.

The business of Dramatic poetry is therefore with the heart essentially; it despises external circumstance.

Lyric poetry may speak of anything that excites emotion in the speaker; while Epic poetry insists on external circumstances, and no more exhibits the heart-feeling than as it may be gathered from these.

For instance, the fight between the Prince of

Wales and Hotspur, in Henry the Fourth, corresponds closely, in the character of the event itself, to the fight of Fitz-James with Roderick, in the Lady of the Lake. But Shakespeare's treatment of his subject is strictly dramatic; Scott's, strictly epic.

Shakespeare gives you no account whatever of any blow or wound: his stage direction is, briefly, "Hotspur is wounded, and falls." Scott gives you accurate account of every external circumstance, and the finishing touch of botanical accuracy,—

> "Down came the blow; but in the *heath*
> The erring blade found bloodless sheath,"—

makes his work perfect, as epic poetry. And Scott's work is always epic, and it is contrary to his very nature to treat any subject dramatically.

That is the technical distinction, then, between the three modes of work. But the gradation of power in all three depends on the degree of imagination with which the writer can enter into the feelings of other people. Whether in expressing theirs or his own, and whether in expressing their feelings only, or also the circumstances surrounding them, his power depends on his being able to feel as they do; in other words, on his being able to conceive character. And the literature which is not poetry at all, which is essentially unsentimental, or anti-poetic, is that which is produced by persons who have no imagination; and whose merit (for of course I am not speaking of bad literature) is in their wit or sense, instead of their imagination.

The most prosaic, in this sense, piece I have ever myself examined, in the literature of any nation, is the Henriade of Voltaire. You may take that as a work of a man whose head was as destitute of imaginative power as it is possible for the healthy cerebral organization of a highly developed mammalian animal to be. The description of the storm which carries Henry to Jersey, and of the hermit in Jersey "que Dieu lui fit connaitre," and who, on that occasion, "au bord d'une onde pure, offre un festin champêtre," cannot be rivalled, for stupor in conceptive power, among printed books of reputation. On the other hand, Voltaire's wit, and reasoning faculties, are nearly as strong as his imagination is weak. His natural disposition is kind; his sympathy therefore is sincere with any sorrow that he can conceive; and his indignation great against injustices of which he cannot comprehend the pathetic motives. Now notice further this, which is very curious, and to me inexplicable, but not on that account less certain as a fact.

The imaginative power always purifies; the want of it therefore as essentially defiles; and as the wit-power is apt to develope itself through absence of imagination, it seems as if wit itself had a defiling tendency. In Pindar, Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Scott, the colossal powers of imagination result in absolute virginal purity of thought. The defect of imagination and the splendid rational power in Pope and Horace associate themselves—it is difficult to say in what decided measures—with foulness of

thought. The Candide of Voltaire, in its gratuitous filth, its acute reasoning, and its entire vacuity of imagination, is a standard of what may perhaps be generally and fitly termed 'fimetic literature,' still capable, by its wit, and partial truth, of a certain service in its way. But lower forms of modern literature and art—Gustave Doré's paintings, for instance,—are the corruption, in national decrepitude, of this pessimist method of thought; and of these, the final condemnation is true—they are neither fit for the land, nor *yet* for the dunghill.

It is one of the most curious problems respecting mental government to determine how far this fimetic taint must necessarily affect intellects in which the reasoning and imaginative powers are equally balanced, and both of them at high level,—as in Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Molière, Cervantes, and Fielding; but it always indicates the side of character which is unsympathetic, and therefore unkind; (thus Shakespeare makes Iago the foulest in thought, as cruelest in design, of all his villains,) but which, in men of noble nature, is their safeguard against weak enthusiasms and ideals. It is impossible, however, that the highest conditions of tenderness in affectionate conception can be reached except by the absolutely virginal intellect. Shakespeare and Chaucer throw off, at noble work, the lower part of their natures as they would a rough dress; and you may also notice this, that the power of conceiving personal, as opposed to general, character, depends on this purity of heart and

sentiment. The men who cannot quit themselves of the impure taint, never invent character, properly so called; they only invent symbols of common humanity. Even Fielding's Allworthy is not a character, but a type of a simple English gentleman; and Squire Western is not a character, but a type of the rude English squire. But Sir Roger de Coverley is a character, as well as a type; there is no one else like him; and the masters of Tullyveolan, Ellangowan, Monkbarns, and Osbaldistone Hall, are all, whether slightly or completely drawn, portraits, not mere symbols.

The little piece which I shall to-day further translate for you from my Swiss novel is interesting chiefly in showing the power with which affectionate and sentimental imagination may attach itself even to inanimate objects, and give them personality. But the works of its writer generally show the most wholesome balance of the sentimental and rational faculty I have ever met with in literature; —the part of Gotthelf's nature which is in sympathy with Pope and Fielding enables him to touch, to just the necessary point, the lower grotesqueness of peasant nature, while his own conception of ideal nature is as pure as Wordsworth's.

But I have only room in this 'Fors' for a very little bit more of the broom-maker. I continue the last sentence of it from Letter XXX. :—

"And then Hansli always knew that as soon as he got home there would be enough to eat;—his mother saw faithfully to that. She knew the

difference it makes whether a man finds something ready to eat, when he comes in, or not. He who knows there will be something at home does not stop in the taverns; he arrives with an empty stomach, and furnishes it, highly pleased with all about him; but if he usually finds nothing ready when at home, he stops on the road, comes in when he has had enough or too much; and grumbles right and left.

"Hansli was not avaricious, but economical. For things really useful and fit, he did not look at the money. In all matters of food and clothes, he wished his mother to be thoroughly at ease. He made a good bed for himself; and when he had saved enough to buy a knife or a good tool, he was quite up in the air. He himself dressed well, not expensively, but solidly. Any one with a good eye knows quickly enough, at the sight of houses or of people, whether they are going up or down. As for Hansli, it was easy to see he was on his way up—not that he ever put on anything fine, but by his cleanliness and the careful look of his things: aussi, everybody liked to see him, and was very glad to know that he prospered thus, not by fraud, but by work. With all that, he never forgot his prayers. On Sunday he made no brooms; in the morning he went to the sermon,* and in the afternoon he read a

* Much the most important part of the service in Protestant Switzerland, and a less formal one than in Scotland.

chapter of the Bible to his mother, whose sight was now failing. After that he gave himself a personal treat. This treat consisted in bringing out all his money, counting it, looking at it,* and calculating how much it had increased, and how much it would yet increase, etc., etc. In that money there were some very pretty pieces,—above all, pretty white pieces" (silver among the copper). "Hansli was very strong in exchanges; he took small money willingly enough, but never kept it long; it seemed always to him that the wind got into it and carried it off too quickly. The new white pieces gave him an extreme pleasure, —above all, the fine dollars of Berne with the bear, and the superb Swiss of old time. When he had managed to catch one of these, it made him happy for many days.†

"Nevertheless, he had also his bad days. It was always a bad day for him when he lost a customer, or had counted on placing a dozen of new brooms anywhere, and found himself briskly

* Utmost wisdom is not in self-denial, but in learning to find extreme pleasure in very little things.

† This pleasure is a perfectly natural and legitimate one, and all the more because it is possible only when the riches are very moderate. After getting the first shilling of which I told you, I set my mind greatly upon getting a pile of new "lion shillings," as I called them--the lion standing on the top of the crown; and my delight in the bloomy surface of their dead silver is quite a memorable joy to me. I have engraved, for the frontispiece, the two sides of one of Hansli's Sunday playthings; it is otherwise interesting as an example of the comparatively vulgar coinage of a people uneducated in art.

sent from the door with 'We've got all we want.' At first Hansli could not understand the cause of such rebuffs, not knowing that there are people who change their cook as often as their shirt—sometimes oftener,—and that he couldn't expect new cooks to know him at first sight. He asked himself then, with surprise, what he could have failed in,—whether his brooms had come undone, or whether anybody had spoken ill of him. He took that much to heart, and would plague himself all night to find out the real cause. But soon he took the thing more coolly; and even when a cook who knew him very well sent him about his business, he thought to himself, 'Bah! cooks are human creatures, like other people; and when master or mistress has been rough with them* because they've put too much pepper in the soup, or too much salt in the sauce, or when their schatz' (lover, — literally, treasure) 'is gone off to Pepperland,† the poor girls have well the right to quarrel with somebody else.' Nevertheless, the course of time needs brought him some worse days still, which he never got himself to take coolly. He knew now, personally, very nearly all his trees; he had indeed given, for himself alone, names to his willows, and some other particular trees, as Lizzie, Little Mary-Anne, Rosie, and so on.

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* Has quarrelled with them.

† "Les ont brusquées." I can't get the derivation beyond Johnson: "Fr. brusque; Gothic, braska." But the Italian brusco is connected with the Provençal brusca, thicket, and Fr. broussaille.

These trees kept him in joy all the year round, and he divided very carefully the pleasure of gathering their twigs. He treated the most beautiful with great delicacy, and carried the brooms of them to his best customers. It is true to say also that these were always master-brooms. But when he arrived thus, all joyous, at his willows, and found his Lizzie or his Rosie all cut and torn from top to bottom, his heart was so strained that the tears ran down his cheeks, and his blood became so hot that one could have lighted matches at it. That made him unhappy for a length of time; he could not swallow it, and all he asked was that the thief might fall into his grip, not for the value of the twigs, but because his trees had been hurt. If Hansli was not tall, still he knew how to use his limbs and his strength, and he felt his heart full of courage. On that point he absolutely would not obey his mother, who begged him for the love of God not to meddle with people who might kill him, or do him some grievous harm. But Hansli took no heed of all that. He lay in wait and spied until he caught somebody. Then there were blows and formidable battles in the midst of the solitary trees. Sometimes Hansli got the better, sometimes he came home all in disorder. But at the worst, he gained at least this, that thenceforward one let his willows more and more alone, as happens always when a thing is defended with valour and perseverance. What is the use of putting oneself in the way of blows, when one can

get things somewhere else without danger? Aussi, the Rychiswyl farmers were enchanted with their courageous little garde-champêtre, and if one or the other saw him with his hair pulled, they failed not to say, 'Never mind, Hansli; he will have had his dance all the same. Tell me the next time you see anything—I'll go with you, and we'll cure him of his taste for brooms.' Whereupon, Hansli would tell him when he saw anybody about that should not be; the peasant* kept himself hid; Hansli began the attack; the adversary, thinking himself strongest, waited for him; once the thief seized, the peasant showed himself, and all was said. Then the marauder would have got away if he could, but Hansli never let go till he had been beaten as was fitting.

"This was a very efficacious remedy against the switch-stealers, and little Mary-Anne and Rosie remained in perfect security in the midst of the loneliest fields. Thus Hansli passed some years without perceiving it, and without imagining that things could ever change. A week passed, as the hand went round the clock, he didn't know how. Tuesday, market-day at Berne, was there before he could think about it; and Tuesday was no sooner past than Saturday was there; and he had to go to Thun, whether he would or no, for how could the Thun people get on without him? Between times he had enough to do to prepare

* Paysan—see above.

his cartload, and to content his customers,—that is to say, those of them that pleased him. Our Hansli was a man; and every man, when his position permits it, has his caprices of liking and disliking. Whenever one had trod on his toes, one must have been very clever afterwards to get the least twig of a broom from him. The parson's wife, for instance, couldn't have got one if she would have paid for it twice over. It was no use sending to him; every time she did, he said he was very sorry, but he hadn't a broom left that would suit her.

"That was because she had one day said to him that he was just like other people, and contented himself with putting a few long twigs all round, and then bad ones in the middle.

"'Then you may as well get your brooms from somebody else,' said he; and held to it too;—so well that the lady died without ever having been able to get the shadow of a broom from him.

"One Tuesday he was going to Berne with an enormous cartful of his prettiest brooms, all gathered from his favourite trees, that is to say, Rosie, Little Mary-Anne, and company. He was pulling with all his strength, and greatly astonished to find that his cart didn't go of itself, as it did at first; that it really pulled too hard, and that something must be wrong with it. At every moment he was obliged to stop to take breath and wipe his forehead. 'If only I was at the top of the hill of

Stalden!' said he. He had stopped thus in the little wood of Muri, close to the bench that the women rest their baskets on. Upon the bench sat a young girl, holding a little bundle beside her, and weeping hot tears. Hansli, who had a kind heart, asked her what she was crying for.

"The young girl recounted to him that she was obliged to go into the town, and that she was so frightened she scarcely dared; that her father was a shoemaker, and that all his best customers were in the town; that for a long time she had carried her bundle of shoes in, on market days, and that nothing had ever happened to her. But behold, there had arrived in the town a new gendarme, very cross, who had already tormented her every Tuesday she had come, for some time back; and threatened her, if she came again, to take her shoes from her, and put her in prison. She had begged her father not to send her any more, but her father was as severe as a Prussian soldier, and had ordered her to 'go in, always; and if anybody hurt her, it was with him they would have affairs;' but what would that help her?—she was just as much afraid of the gendarme as before.

"Hansli felt himself touched with compassion; above all, on account of the confidence the young girl had had in telling him all this; that which certainly she would not have done to everybody. 'But she has seen at once that I am not a bad fellow, and that I have a kind heart,' thought he.

"Poor Hansli!—but after all, it is faith which saves, people say."

A young lady writing to me the other day to ask what I really wanted girls to do, I answered as follows, requesting her to copy the answer, that it might serve once for all. I print it accordingly, as perhaps a more simple statement than the one given in 'Sesame and Lilies.'

Women's work is,—

I. To please people.
II. To feed them in dainty ways.
III. To clothe them.
IV. To keep them orderly.
V. To teach them.

I. To please.—A woman must be a pleasant creature. Be sure that people like the room better with you in it than out of it; and take all pains to get the power of sympathy, and the habit of it.

II. Can you cook plain meats and dishes economically and savourily? If not, make it your first business to learn, as you find opportunity. When you can, advise, and personally help, any poor woman within your reach who will be glad of help in that matter: always avoiding impertinence or discourtesy of interference. Acquaint yourself with the poor, not as their patroness, but their friend: if then you can modestly recommend a little more water in the pot, or half an hour's more boiling, or a dainty bone they did not know of, you will have been useful indeed.

III. To clothe.—Set aside a quite fixed portion of your time for making strong and pretty articles of dress of the best procurable materials. You may use a sewing machine; but what work is to be done (in order that it may be entirely sound) with finger and thimble, is to be your especial business.

First-rate material, however costly, sound work, and such prettiness as ingenious choice of colour and adaptation of simple form will admit, are to be your aims. Head-dress may be fantastic, if it be stout, clean, and consistently worn, as a Norman paysanne's cap. And you will be more useful in getting up, ironing, etc., a pretty cap for a poor girl who has not taste or time to do it for herself, than in making flannel petticoats or knitting stockings. But do both, and give (don't be afraid of giving;—Dorcas wasn't raised from the dead that modern clergymen might call her a fool)—the things you make to those who verily need them. What sort of persons these *are*, you have to find out. It is a most important part of your work.

IV. To keep them orderly,—primarily, clean, tidy, regular in habits.—Begin by keeping *things* in order; soon you will be able to keep people, also.

Early rising—on all grounds, is for yourself indispensable. You must be at work by latest at six in summer and seven in winter. (Of course that puts an end to evening parties, and so it is a blessed condition in two directions at once.) Every day do a little bit of housemaid's work in your own house, thoroughly, so as to be a pattern of perfection in that kind. Your actual housemaid will then follow your lead, if there's an atom of woman's spirit in her—(if not, ask your mother to get another). Take a step or two of stair, and a corner of

the dining-room, and keep them polished like bits of a Dutch picture.

If you have a garden, spend all spare minutes in it in actual gardening. If not, get leave to take care of part of some friend's, a poor person's, but always out of doors. Have nothing to do with greenhouses, still less with hothouses.

When there are no flowers to be looked after, there are dead leaves to be gathered, snow to be swept, or matting to be nailed, and the like.

V. Teach—yourself first—to read with attention, and to remember with affection, what deserves both, and nothing else. Never read borrowed books. To be without books of your own is the abyss of penury. Don't endure it. And when you've to buy them, you'll think whether they're worth reading; which you had better, on all accounts.

LETTER XXXV

SONGS OF SONGS

BRANTWOOD,
18th September, 1873.

LOOKING up from my paper, as I consider what I am to say in this letter, and in what order to say it, I see out of my window, on the other side of the lake, the ivied chimneys (thick and strong-built, like castle towers, and not at all disposed to drop themselves over people below,) of the farmhouse where, I told you the other day, I saw its mistress preparing the feast of berry-bread for her sheep-shearers. In that farmhouse, about two hundred and fifty years ago, warmed himself at the hearth, ten feet across, of its hall, the English squire who wrote the version of the Psalms from which I chose for you the fourteenth and fifteenth, last November. Of the said squire I wish you, this November, to know somewhat more; here, to begin, is his general character, given by a biographer who may be trusted:—

"He was a true model of worth; a man fit for conquest, plantation, reformation, or what action soever is greatest and hardest among men; withal such a lover of mankind and goodness, that

whosoever had any real parts in him found comfort, participation, and protection to the uttermost of his power. The universities abroad and at home accounted him a general Mæcenas of learning, dedicated their books to him, and communicated every invention or improvement of knowledge to him. Soldiers honoured him, and were so honoured by him, as no man thought he marched under the true banner of Mars, that had not obtained his approbation. Men of affairs in most parts of Christendom entertained correspondency with him. But what speak I of these? His heart and capacity were so large, that there was not a cunning painter, a skilful engineer, an excellent musician, or any other artificer of extraordinary fame, that made not himself known to this famous spirit, and found him his true friend without hire, and the common rendezvous of worth, in his time."

This being (and as I can assure you, by true report,) his character, and manner of life, you are to observe these things, farther, about his birth, fate, and death.

When he was born, his mother was in mourning for her father, brother, and sister-in-law, who all had died on the scaffold. Yet, very strangely, you will find that he takes no measures, in his political life, for the abolition of capital punishment.

Perhaps I had better at once explain to you the meaning of his inactivity in that cause, although for my own part I like best to put questions only, and leave you to work them out for yourselves as

you are able. But you could not easily answer this one without help. This psalm-singing squire has nothing to urge against capital punishment, because his grandfather, uncle, and aunt-in-law all died innocent. It is only rogues who have a violent objection to being hanged, and only abettors of rogues who would desire anything else for them. Honest men don't in the least mind being hanged occasionally by mistake, so only that the general principle of the gallows be justly maintained; and they have the pleasure of knowing that the world they leave is positively minded to cleanse itself of the human vermin with which they have been classed by mistake.

The contrary movement — so vigorously progressive in modern days—has its real root in a gradually increasing conviction on the part of the English nation that they are *all* vermin. ('Worms' is the orthodox Evangelical expression.) Which indeed is becoming a fact, very fast indeed;—but was by no means so in the time of this psalm-singing squire. In his days, there was still a quite sharp separation between honest men and rogues; and the honest men were perfectly clear about the duty of trying to find out which was which. The confusion of the two characters is a result of the peculiar forms of vice and ignorance, reacting on each other, which belong to the modern Evangelical sect, as distinguished from other bodies of Christian men; and date therefore, necessarily, from the Reformation.

They consist especially in three things. First, in declaring a bad translation of a group of books of various qualities, accidentally associated, to be the 'Word of God.' Secondly, reading, of this singular 'Word of God,' only the bits they like; and never taking any pains to understand even those.* Thirdly, resolutely refusing to practise even the very small bits they do understand, if such practice happen to go against their own worldly—especially money—interests. Of which three errors, the climax is in their always delightedly reading—without in the slightest degree understanding—the fourteenth Psalm; and never reading, nor apparently thinking it was ever intended they should read, the next one to it—the fifteenth. For which reason I gave you those two together, from the squire's version, last November,—and, this November and December, will try to make you understand both. For among those books accidentally brought together, and recklessly called the 'Word of God,' the book of Psalms is a very precious one. It is certainly not the 'Word of God'; but it is the collected words of very wise

* I have long since expressed these facts in my 'Ethics of the Dust,' but too metaphorically. "The way in which common people read their Bibles is just like the way that the old monks thought hedgehogs ate grapes. They rolled themselves (it was said) over and over, where the grapes lay on the ground: what fruit stuck to their spines, they carried off and ate. So your hedgehoggy readers roll themselves over and over their Bibles, and declare that whatever sticks to their own spines is Scripture, and that nothing else is."

and good men, who knew a great many important things which you don't know, and had better make haste to know,—and were ignorant of some quite unimportant things, which Professor Huxley knows, and thinks himself wiser on that account than any quantity of Psalmists, or Canticle-singers either. The distinction between the two, indeed, is artificial, and worse than that, non-natural. For it is just as proper and natural, sometimes, to write a psalm, or solemn song, to your mistress, and a canticle, or joyful song, to God, as to write grave songs only to God, and canticles to your mistress. And there is, observe, no proper distinction in the words at all. When Jean de Meung continues the love-poem of William de Loris, he says sorrowfully:—

> "Cys trespassa Guilleaume
> De Loris, et ne fit plus pseaume."
>
> "Here died William
> Of Loris, and made psalm no more."

And the best word for "Canticles" in the Bible is "Asma," or Song, which is just as grave a word as Psalmos, or Psalm.

And as it happens, this psalm-singing, or, at least, exquisitely psalm-translating, squire, mine ancient neighbour, is just as good a canticle-singer. I know no such lovely love poems as his, since Dante's.

Here is a specimen for you, which I choose because of its connection with the modern subject of railroads; only note, first,

The word Squire, I told you, meant primarily a

"rider." And it does not at all mean, and never can mean, a person carried in an iron box by a kettle on wheels. Accordingly, this squire, riding to visit his mistress along an old English road, addresses the following sonnet to the ground of it,—gravel or turf, I know not which :—

> "Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be ;
> And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
> Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet,
> More oft than to a chamber melody ;
> Now, blessed you, bear onward blessed me,
> To her, where I my heart, safe left, shall meet ;
> My Muse and I must you of duty greet
> With thanks and wishes ; wishing thankfully—
> 'Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed ;
> By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot ;
> Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed ;
> And that you know, I envy you no lot
> Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,—
> Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss.'"

Hundreds of years! You think that a mistake? No, it is the very rapture of love. A lover like this does not believe his mistress can grow old, or die. How do you think the other verses read, apropos of railway signals and railway scrip?

> "Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed,*
> Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed."

* In August there were three 'accidents,' so called, for every five days. In the thirty days of September there have been in all thirty-six.

It is revolting because it discloses a miserable greed, and an entire callousness of conscience on the part of railway directors, railway companies, and the railway interest alike, and in the

But to keep our eyes and ears with our squire. Presently he comes in sight of his mistress's house, and then sings this sonnet:—

"I see the house; my heart, thyself contain!
Beware full sails drown not thy tott'ring barge;
Lest joy, by nature apt spirits to enlarge,
Thee, to thy wreck, beyond thy limits strain.
Nor do like lords, whose weak, confused brain,
Not pointing to fit folks each undercharge,
While ev'ry office themselves will discharge,
With doing all, leave nothing done but pain.
But give apt servants their due place; let eyes
See beauty's total sum, summ'd in her face;
Let ears hear speech, which wit to wonder ties;
Let breath suck up those sweets; let arms embrace
The globe of weal; lips, Love's indentures make;
Thou, but of all the kingly tribute take!"

And here is one more, written after a quarrel, which is the prettiest of all as a song; and interesting for you to compare with the Baron of Bradwardine's song at Lucky M'Leary's:—

"All my sense thy sweetness gained,
Thy fair hair my heart enchained;
My poor reason thy words moved,
So that thee, like heav'n, I loved.

Fa, la, la, leridan, dan, dan, dan, deridan;
Dan, dan, dan, deridan, dei;
While to my mind the outside stood,
For messenger of inward good.

Government and Legislature a most unworthy and unwise cowardice. It is true that the situation may be accounted for by the circumstance that there are between one and two hundred railway directors in the House of Commons who uniformly band together, but that explanation does not improve the fact.—(*Pall Mall Gazette.*)

Now thy sweetness sour is deemed ;
Thy hair not worth a hair esteemed,
Reason hath thy words removed,
Finding that but words they proved.

Fa, la, la, leridan, dan, dan, dan, deridan ;
Dan, dan, dan, deridan, dei ;
For no fair sign can credit win,
If that the substance fail within.

No more in thy sweetness glory,
For thy knitting hair be sorry ;
Use thy words but to bewail thee,
That no more thy beams avail thee.
Dan, dan,
Dan, dan,
Lay not thy colours more to view
Without the picture be found true.

Woe to me, alas ! she weepeth !
Fool ! in me what folly creepeth ?
Was I to blaspheme enraged
Where my soul I have engaged ?
And wretched I must yield to this ?
The fault I blame, her chasteness is.

Sweetness ! sweetly pardon folly ;
Tie me, hair, your captive wholly ;
Words ! O words of heav'nly knowledge !
Know, my words their faults acknowledge ;
And all my life I will confess,
The less I love, I live the less."

Now if you don't like these love-songs, you either have never been in love, or you don't know good writing from bad, (and likely enough both the negatives, I'm sorry to say, in modern England).

But perhaps if you are a very severe Evangelical person, you may like them still less, when you know something more about them. Excellent love-songs seem always to be written under strange conditions. The writer of that "Song of Songs" was himself, as you perhaps remember, the child of her for whose sake the Psalmist murdered his Hittite friend; and besides, loved many strange women himself, after that first bride. And these, sixty or more, exquisite love-ditties, from which I choose, almost at random, the above three, are all written by my psalm-singing squire to somebody else's wife, he having besides a very nice wife of his own.

For this squire is the, so called, 'Divine' Astrophel, 'Astrophilos,' or star lover,—the un-to-be-imitated Astrophel, the 'ravishing sweetness of whose poesy,' Sir Piercie Shafton, with his widowed voice, —"widowed in that it is no longer matched by my beloved viol-de-gambo,"—bestows on the unwilling ears of the Maid of Avenel.* And the Stella, or star, whom he loved was the Lady Penelope Devereux, who was his first love, and to whom he was betrothed, and remained faithful in heart all his life, though she was married to Robert, Lord Rich, and he to the daughter of his old friend, Sir Francis Walsingham.

How very wrong, you think?

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* If you don't know your Scott properly, it is of no use to give you references.

Well, perhaps so;—we will talk of the wrongs and the rights of it presently. One of quite the most curious facts bearing upon them is that the very strict queen (the mother of Cœur-de-Lion) who poisoned the Rose of Woodstock and the world for her improper conduct, had herself presided at the great court of judgment held by the highest married ladies of Christian Europe, which re-examined, and finally re-affirmed, the decree of the Court of love, held under the presidency of Ermengarde, Countess of Narbonne;—decree, namely, that "True love cannot exist between married persons."* Meantime let me finish what I have mainly to tell you of the divine Astrophel. You hear by the general character first given of him that he was as good a soldier as a lover, and being about to take part in a skirmish in the Netherlands, —in which, according to English history, five hundred, or a few more, English, entirely routed three thousand Dutchmen,—as he was going into action, meeting the marshal of the camp lightly armed, he must needs throw off his own cuishes, or thigh armour, not to have an unfair advantage of him; and after having so led three charges, and had one horse killed under him and mounted another, "he was struck by a musket shot a little above his left knee, which brake and rifted the bone, and entered the thigh upward; whereupon he unwillingly left the field," (not without an act of

* "Dicimus, et stabilito tenore firmamus, amorem non posse, inter duas jugales, suas extendere vires."

gentleness, afterwards much remembered, to a poor soldier, wounded also;) and, after lingering sixteen days in severe and unceasing pain, "which he endured with all the fortitude and resignation of a Christian, symptoms of mortification, the certain forerunner of death, at length appeared; which he himself being the first to perceive, was able nevertheless to amuse his sick-bed by composing an ode on the nature of his wound, which he caused to be sung to solemn music, as an entertainment that might soothe and divert his mind from his torments; and on the 16th October breathed his last breath in the arms of his faithful secretary and bosom companion, Mr. William Temple, after giving this charge to his own brother: "Love my memory; cherish my friends. Their faith to me may assure you they are honest. But above all govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator,* in me beholding the end of this world, with all its vanities."

Thus died, for England, and a point of personal honour, in the thirty-second year of his age, Sir Philip Sidney, whose name perhaps you have heard before, as well as that of his aunt-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, for whose capital punishment, as well as that of the Duke of Northumberland, (his grandfather,) his mother, as above stated, was in mourning when he was born.

And Spenser broke off his Faërie Queen, for

* He meant the Bible; having learned Evangelical views at the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

grief, when he died; and all England went into mourning for him; which meant, at that time, that England was really sorry, and not that an order had been received from Court.

16*th October.* (St. Michael's.)—I haven't got my goose-pie made, after all; for my cook has been ill, and, unluckily, I've had other things as much requiring the patronage of St. Michael, to think of. You suppose, perhaps, (the English generally seem to have done so since the blessed Reformation,) that it is impious and Popish to think of St. Michael with reference to any more serious affair than the roasting of goose, or baking thereof; and yet I have had some amazed queries from my correspondents, touching the importance I seem to attach to my pie; and from others, questioning the economy of its construction. I don't suppose a more savoury, preservable, or nourishing dish could be made, with Michael's help, to drive the devil of hunger out of poor men's stomachs, on the occasions when Christians make a feast, and call to it the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. But, putting the point of economy aside for the moment, I must now take leave to reply to my said correspondents, that the importance and reality of goose-pie, in the English imagination, as compared with the unimportance and unreality of the archangel Michael, his name, and his hierarchy, are quite as serious subjects of regret to me as to them; and that I believe them to be

mainly traceable to the loss of the ideas, both of any 'arche,' beginning, or princedom of things, and of any holy or hieratic end of things; so that, except in eggs of vermin, embryos of apes, and other idols of genesis enthroned in Mr. Darwin's and Mr. Huxley's shrines, or in such extinction as may be proper for lice, or double-ends as may be discoverable in amphisbaenas, there is henceforward, for man, neither alpha nor omega,—neither beginning nor end, neither nativity nor judgment; no Christmas Day, except for pudding; no Michaelmas, except for goose; no Dies Iræ, or day of final capital punishment, for anything; and that, therefore, in the classical words of Ocellus Lucanus, quoted by Mr. Ephraim Jenkinson, "Anarchon kai atelutaion to pan."

There remains, however, among us, very strangely, some instinct of general difference between the abstractedly angelic, hieratic, or at least lord- and lady-like character;—and the diabolic, non-hieratic, or slave- and (reverse-of-lady-) like character. Instinct, which induces the *London Journal*, and other such popular works of fiction, always to make their heroine, whether saint or poisoner, a 'Lady' something; and which probably affects your minds not a little in connection with the question of capital punishment; so that when I told you just now who Sir Philip's aunt was, perhaps you felt as if I had cheated you by the words of my first reference to her, and would say to yourselves, "Well, but Lady Jane Grey wasn't hanged!"

No; she was not hanged; nor crucified, which was the most vulgar of capital punishments in Christ's time; nor kicked to death, which you at present consider the proper form of capital punishment for your wives; nor abused to death, which the mob will consider the proper form of capital punishment for your daughters, when Mr. John Stuart Mill's Essay on Liberty shall have become the Gospel of England, and his statue be duly adored.

She was only decapitated, in the picturesque manner represented to you by Mr. Paul de la Roche in that charming work of modern French art which properly companions the series of Mr. Gerome's deaths of duellists and gladiators, and Mr. Gustave Doré's pictures of lovers, halved, or quartered, with their hearts jumping into their mistresses' laps. Of all which pictures, the medical officer of the Bengalee-Life-Insurance Society would justly declare that "even in an anatomical point of view, they were—per-fection."

She was only decapitated, by a man in a black mask, on a butcher's block; and her head rolled into sawdust,—if that's any satisfaction to you. But why on earth do you care more about her than anybody else, in these days of liberty and equality?

LETTER XXXVI

TRAVELLER'S REST

THREE years have passed since I began these letters. Of the first, and another, I forget which, a few more than a thousand have been sold; and as the result of my begging for money, I have got upwards of two hundred pounds. Had I been a swindler, the British public would delightedly have given me two hundred thousand pounds instead of two hundred, of which I might have returned them, by this time, say, the quarter, in dividends; spent a hundred and fifty thousand pleasantly, myself, at the rate of fifty thousand a year; and announced, in this month's report, with regret, the failure of my project, owing to the unprecedented state of commercial affairs induced by strikes, unions, and other illegitimate combinations among the workmen.

And the most curious part of the business is that I fancy I should have been a much more happy and agreeable member of society, spending my fifty thousand a year thus, in the way of business, than I have been in giving away my own seven thousand, and painfully adding to it this collection of two hundred, for a piece of work which is to give

me a great deal of trouble, and be profitable only to other people.

Happy, or sulky, however, I have got this thing to do; and am only amused, instead of discouraged, by the beautiful reluctance of the present English public to trust an honest person, without being flattered, or promote a useful work, without being bribed.

It may be true that I have not brought my plan rightly before the public yet. "A bad thing will pay, if you put it properly before the public," wrote a first-rate man of business the other day, to one of my friends. But what the final results of putting bad things properly before the public will be to the exhibitor of them, and the public also, no man of business that I am acquainted with is yet aware.

I mean, therefore, to persist in my own method; and to allow the public to take their time. One of their most curiously mistaken notions is that they can hurry the pace of Time itself, or avert its power. As to these letters of mine, for instance, which all my friends beg me not to write, because no workman will understand them now;—what would have been the use of writing letters only for the men who have been produced by the instructions of Mr. John Stuart Mill? I write to the labourers of England; but not of England in 1870–73. A day will come when we shall have men resolute to do good work, and capable of reading and thinking while they rest; who will

not expect to build like Athenians without knowing anything about the first king of Athens, nor like Christians without knowing anything about Christ: and then they will find my letters useful, and read them. And to the few readers whom these letters now find, they will become more useful as they go on, for they are a mosaic-work into which I can put a piece here and there as I find glass of the colour I want; what is as yet done being set, indeed, in patches, but not without design.

One chasm I must try to fill to-day, by telling you why it is so grave a heresy (or wilful source of division) to call any book, or collection of books, the 'Word of God.'

By that Word, or Voice, or Breath, or Spirit, the heavens and earth, and all the host of them, were made; and in it they exist. It is your life; and speaks to you always, so long as you live nobly; —dies out of you as you refuse to obey it; leaves you to hear, and be slain by, the word of an evil spirit, instead of it.

It may come to you in books,—come to you in clouds,—come to you in the voices of men,—come to you in the stillness of deserts. You must be strong in evil, if you have quenched it wholly;— very desolate in this Christian land, if you have never heard it at all. Too certainly, in this Christian land you do hear, and loudly, the contrary of it,—the doctrine or word of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy; forbidding to marry, recommending

women to find some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby; and commanding to abstain from meats, (and drinks,) which God has appointed to be received with thanksgiving. For "everything which God has made is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be sanctified by the Word of God." And by what else?

If you have been accustomed to hear the clergyman's letter from which I have just been quoting, as if it were *itself* the Word of God,—you have been accustomed also to hear our bad translation of it go on saying, "If it be sanctified by the Word of God, and *prayer*." But there is nothing whatever about prayer in the clergyman's letter,—nor does he say, *If* it be sanctified. He says, "For it *is* sanctified by the Word of God, and the chance that brings it."* Which means, that when meat comes in your way when you are hungry, or drink when you are thirsty, and you know in your own conscience that it is good for you to have it, the meat and drink are holy to you.

But if the Word of God in your heart is against it, and you know that you would be better without the extra glass of beer you propose to take, and that your wife would be the better for the price of it, then it is unholy to you: and you can only have the sense of entire comfort and satisfaction, either in having it, or going without it, if you are simply

* The complete idea I believe to be "the Divine Fors," or Providence, accurately so called, of God. "For it is sanctified by the Word of God, and the granting."

obeying the Word of God about it in your mind, and accepting contentedly the chances for or against it; as probably you have heard of Sir Philip Sidney's accepting the chance of another soldier's needing his cup of water more than he, on his last battle-field, and instantly obeying the Word of God coming to him on that occasion. Not that it is intended that the supply of these good creatures of God should be left wholly to chance; but that if we observe the proper laws of God concerning them, and, for instance, instead of forbidding marriage, duly and deeply reverence it, then, in proper time and place, there will be true Fors, or chancing on, or finding of, the youth and maid by each other, such in character as the Providence of Heaven appoints for each: and, similarly, if we duly recognize the laws of God about meats and drinks, there will for every labourer and traveller be such chancing upon meat and drink and other entertainment as shall be sacredly pleasant to him. And there cannot indeed be at present imagined a more sacred function for young Christian men than that of hosts or hospitallers, supplying, to due needs, and with proper maintenance of their own lives, wholesome food and drink to all men: so that as, at least, always at one end of a village there may be a holy church and vicar, so at the other end of the village there may be a holy tavern and tapster, ministering the good creatures of God, so that they may be sanctified by the Word of God and His Providence.

And as the providence of marriage, and the giving to each man the help meet for his life, is now among us destroyed by the wantonness of harlotry, so the providence of the Father who would fill men's hearts with food and gladness is destroyed among us by prostitution of joyless drink; and the never to be enough damned guilt of men, and governments, gathering pence at the corners of the streets, standing there, pot in hand, crying, 'Turn in hither; come, eat of my evil bread, and drink of my beer, which I have venomously mingled.'

Against which temptations—though never against the tempters—one sometimes hears one's foolish clergy timorously inveighing; and telling young idlers that it is wrong to be lustful, and old labourers that it is wrong to be thirsty: but I never heard a clergyman yet, (and during thirty years of the prime of my life I heard one sermon at least every Sunday, so that it is after experience of no fewer than one thousand five hundred sermons, most of them by scholars, and many of them by earnest men,) that I now solemnly state I never heard *one* preacher deal faithfully with the quarrel between God and Mammon, or explain the need of choice between the service of those two masters. And all vices are indeed summed, and all their forces consummated, in that simple acceptance of the authority of gold instead of the authority of God; and preference of gain, or the increase of gold, to godliness, or the peace of God.

I take then, as I promised, the fourteenth and

fifteenth Psalms for examination with respect to this point.

The second verse of the fourteenth declares that of the children of men, there are none that seek God.

The fifth verse of the same Psalm declares that God is in the generation of the righteous. *In* them, observe; not needing to be sought by them.

From which statements, evangelical persons conclude that there are no righteous persons at all.

Again, the fourth verse of the Psalm declares that all the workers of iniquity eat up God's people as they eat bread.

Which appears to me a very serious state of things, and to be put an end to, if possible; but evangelical persons conclude thereupon that the workers of iniquity and the Lord's people are one and the same. Nor have I ever heard in the course of my life any single evangelical clergyman so much as put the practical inquiry, Who is eating, and who is being eaten?

Again, the first verse of the Psalm declares that the fool hath said in his heart there is no God; but the sixth verse declares of the poor that he not only knows there is a God, but finds Him to be a refuge.

Whereupon evangelical persons conclude that the fool and the poor mean the same people; and make all the haste they can to be rich.

Putting them, and their interpretations, out of our way, the Psalm becomes entirely explicit. There

have been in all ages children of God and of man: the one born of the Spirit, and obeying it; the other born of the flesh, and obeying it. I don't know how that entirely unintelligible sentence, "There were they in great fear," got into our English Psalm; in both the Greek and Latin versions it is, "God hath broken the bones of those that please men."

And it is here said of the entire body of the children of men, at a particular time, that they had at that time all gone astray beyond hope; that none were left who so much as sought God, much less who were likely to find Him; and that these wretches and vagabonds were eating up God's own people as they ate bread.

Which has indeed been generally so in all ages; but beyond all recorded history is so in ours. Just and godly people can't live; and every clever rogue and industrious fool is making his fortune out of them, and producing abominable works of all sorts besides,—material gasometers, furnaces, chemical works, and the like,—with spiritual lies and lasciviousness unheard of till now in Christendom. Which plain and disagreeable meaning of this portion of Scripture you will find pious people universally reject with abhorrence,—the direct word and open face of their Master being, in the present day, always by them, far more than His other enemies, "spitefully entreated, and spitted on."

Next for the fifteenth Psalm.

It begins by asking God who shall abide in His tabernacle, or movable tavern; and who shall dwell

in His holy hill. Note the difference of those two abidings. A tavern, or taberna, is originally a hut made by a traveller, of sticks cut on the spot; then, if he so arrange it as to be portable, it is a tabernacle; so that, generally a portable hut or house, supported by rods or sticks when it is set up, is a tabernacle;—on a large scale, having boards as well as curtains, and capable of much stateliness, but nearly synonymous with a tent, in Latin.

Therefore, the first question is, Who among travelling men will have God to set up his tavern for him when he wants rest?

And the second question is, Who, of travelling men, shall finally dwell, desiring to wander no more, in God's own house, established above the hills, where all nations flow to it?

You, perhaps, don't believe that either of these abodes may, or do, exist in reality: nor that God would ever cut down branches for you; or, better still, bid them spring up for a bower; or that He would like to see you in His own house, if you would go there. You prefer the buildings lately put up in rows for you "one brick thick in the walls," * in convenient neighbourhood to your pleasant business? Be it so;—then the fifteenth Psalm has nothing to say to you. For those who care to

* "Where the sheep fed last year, five streets of cheap cottages —one brick thick in the walls—(for the factory operatives belonging to two great cotton mills near) are in course of formation—great cartloads of stinking oyster-shells having been laid for their foundations."—(From a Correspondent.)

lodge with God, these following are the conditions of character.

They are to walk or deal uprightly with men. They are to work or do justice; or, in sum, do the best they can with their hands. They are to speak the truth to their own hearts, and see they do not persuade themselves they are honest when they ought to know themselves to be knaves; nor persuade themselves they are charitable and kind, when they ought to know themselves to be thieves and murderers. They are not to bite people with their tongues behind their backs, if they dare not rebuke them face to face. They are not to take up, or catch at, subjects of blame; but they are utterly and absolutely to despise vile persons who fear no God, and think the world was begot by mud, and is fed by money; and they are not to defend a guilty man's cause against an innocent one. Above all, this last verse is written for lawyers, or professed interpreters of justice, who are of all men most villainous, if, knowingly, they take reward against an innocent or rightfully contending person. And on these conditions the promise of God's presence and strength is finally given. He that doeth thus shall not be moved, or shaken: for him, tabernacle and rock are alike safe: no wind shall overthrow them, nor earthquake rend.

That is the meaning of the fourteenth and fifteenth Psalms; and if you so believe them, and obey them, you will find your account in it. And they are the Word of God to you, so far as you have hearts

capable of understanding them, or any other such message brought by His servants. But if your heart is dishonest and rebellious, you may read them for ever with lip-service, and all the while be 'men-pleasers,' whose bones are to be broken at the pit's mouth, and so left incapable of breath, brought by any winds of Heaven. And that is all I have to say to you this year.

LETTER XXXVII

THE CITY WHICH IS OUR OWN

1st January 1874.

"*Selon la loy, et ly prophetes,*
Qui a charité parfaicte
Il ayme Dieu sur toute rien,
De cueur, de force, et d'ame nette;
Celui devons-nous tous de debte
Comme soy-mesmes, son prochain;
Qu'on dit qui m' ayme, ayme mon chien.
De tel pierre, et de tel merrien
Est ès cieulx nostre maison faicte
Car nulz ne peut dire, 'c'est mien,'
Fors ce qu'il a mis en ce bien;
Tout le remenant est retraicte."

According to the Law and the Prophets,
He who has perfect charity,
Loves God above everything,
With heart, with flesh, and with spirit pure.
Him also, our neighbour, we are all in debt
To love as ourselves;
For one says, Who loves me, loves my dog.
Of such stone, and of such crossbeam,
Is in the heavens our house made;
For no one can say, 'It is mine,'
Beyond what he has put into that good;
All the rest is taken away.

ONE day last November, at Oxford, as I was going in at the private door of the University galleries, to give a lecture on the Fine Arts in Florence, I was hindered for a moment by a nice little girl, whipping a top on the pavement. She was a *very* nice little girl; and rejoiced wholly in her whip, and top; but could not inflict the reviving chastisement with all the activity that was in her, because she had on a large and dilapidated pair of woman's shoes, which projected the full length of her own little foot behind it and before; and being securely fastened to her ankles in the manner of mocassins, admitted, indeed, of dextrous glissades, and other modes of progress quite sufficient for ordinary purposes; but not conveniently of all the evolutions proper to the pursuit of a whipping-top.

There were some worthy people at my lecture, and I think the lecture was one of my best. It gave some really trustworthy information about art in Florence six hundred years ago. But all the time I was speaking, I knew that nothing spoken about art, either by myself or other people, could be of the least use to anybody there. For their primary business, and mine, was with art in Oxford, now; not with art in Florence, then; and art in Oxford now was absolutely dependent on our power of solving the question—which I knew that my audience would not even allow to be proposed for solution—"Why have our little girls large shoes?"

Indeed, my great difficulty, of late, whether in

lecturing or writing, is in the intensely practical and matter-of-fact character of my own mind as opposed to the loquacious and speculative disposition, not only of the British public, but of all my quondam friends. I am left utterly stranded, and alone, in life, and thought. Life and knowledge, I ought to say; for I have done what thinking was needful for me long ago, and know enough to act upon, for the few days, or years, I may have yet to live. I find some of my friends greatly agitated in mind, for instance, about Responsibility, Free-will, and the like. I settled all those matters for myself, before I was ten years old, by jumping up and down an awkward turn of four steps in my nursery-stairs, and considering whether it was likely that God knew whether I should jump only three, or the whole four at a time. Having settled it in my mind that He knew quite well, though I didn't, which I should do; and also whether I should fall or not in the course of the performance,—though I was altogether responsible for taking care not to,—I never troubled my head more on the matter, from that day to this. But my friends keep buzzing and puzzling about it, as if they had to order the course of the world themselves; and won't attend to me for an instant, if I ask why little girls have large shoes.

I don't suppose any man, with a tongue in his head, and zeal to use it, was ever left so entirely unattended to, as he grew old, by his early friends; and it is doubly and trebly strange to me, because I have lost none of my power of sympathy with

them. Some are chemists; and I am always glad to hear of the last new thing in elements; some are palæontologists, and I am no less happy to know of any lately unburied beast peculiar in his bones; the lawyers and clergymen can always interest me with any story out of their courts or parishes;—but not one of them ever asks what I am about myself. If they chance to meet me in the streets of Oxford, they ask whether I am staying there. When I say, yes, they ask how I like it; and when I tell them I don't like it at all, and don't think little girls should have large shoes, they tell me I ought to read the 'Cours de Philosophie Positive.' As if a man who had lived to be fifty-four, content with what philosophy was needful to assure him that salt was savoury, and pepper hot, could ever be made positive in his old age, in the impertinent manner of these youngsters. But positive in a pertinent and practical manner, I have been, and shall be, with such stern and steady wedge of fact and act as time may let me drive into the gnarled blockheadism of the British mob.

I am free to confess I did not quite know the sort of creature I had to deal with, when I began, fifteen years ago, nor the quantity of ingenious resistance to practical reform which could be offered by theoretical reformers. Look, for instance, at this report of a speech of Mr. Bright's in the *Times*, on the subject of adulteration of food.*

* Of 6th March, not long ago, but I have lost note of the year.

"The noble lord has taken great pains upon this question, and has brought before the House a great amount of detail in connection with it. As I listened to his observations I hoped and believed that there was, though unintentional, no little exaggeration in them. Although there may be particular cases in which great harm to health and great fraud may possibly be shown, yet I think that general statements of this kind, implicating to a large extent the traders of this country, are dangerous, and are almost certain to be unjust. Now, my hon. friend (Mr. Pochin) who has just addressed the House in a speech showing his entire mastery of the question, has confirmed my opinion, for he has shown —and I dare say he knows as much of the matter as any present—that there is a great deal of exaggeration in the opinions which have prevailed in many parts of the country, and which have even been found to prevail upon the matter in this House. . . . Now, I am prepared to show, that the exaggeration of the noble lord—I do not say intentionally, of course; I am sure he is incapable of that—is just as great in the matter of weights and measures as in that of adulteration. Probably he is not aware that in the list of persons employing weights that are inaccurate—I do not say fraudulent—no distinction is drawn between those who are intentionally fraudulent and those who are accidentally inaccurate, and that the penalty is precisely the same, and the offence is just as eagerly detected, whether there be a fraud or merely an accident. Now, the noble lord will probably be surprised when I tell him that many persons are fined annually, not because their weights are too small, but because they are too large. In fact, when the weights are inaccurate, but are in favour of the customer, still the owner and user of the

weight is liable to the penalty, and is fined. . . . My own impression with regard to this adulteration is that it arises from the very great, and perhaps inevitable, competition in business; and that to a great extent it is promoted by the ignorance of customers. As the ignorance of customers generally is diminishing, we may hope that before long the adulteration of food may also diminish. The noble lord appears to ask that something much more extensive and stringent should be done by Parliament. The fact is, it is vain to attempt by the power of Parliament to penetrate into and to track out evils such as those on which the noble lord has dwelt at such length. It is quite impossible that you should have the oversight of the shops of the country by inspectors, and that you should have persons going into shops to buy sugar, pickles, and Cayenne pepper, to get them analyzed, and then raise complaints against shopkeepers, and bring them before the magistrates. If men in their private businesses were to be tracked by Government officers and inspectors every hour of the day, life would not be worth having, and I recommend them to remove to another country, where they would not be subject to such annoyance."

Now, I neither know, nor does it matter to the public, what Mr. Bright actually said; but the report in the *Times* is the permanent and universally influential form of his sayings: and observe what the substance is, of these three or four hundred Parliamentary words, so reported.

First. That an evil which has been exaggerated ought not to be prevented.

Secondly. That at present we punish honest

men as much as rogues; and must always continue to do so if we punish anybody.

Thirdly. That life would not be worth having if one's weights and measures were liable to inspection.

I can assure Mr. Bright that people who know what life means, can sustain the calamity of the inspection of their weights and measures with fortitude. I myself keep a tea-and-sugar shop. I have had my scales and weights inspected more than once or twice, and am not in the least disposed to bid my native land good-night on that account. That I could bid it nothing *but* good-night—never good-morning, the smoke of it quenching the sun, and its parliamentary talk, of such quality as the above, having become darkness voluble, and some of it worse even than that, a mere watchman's rattle, sprung by alarmed constituencies of rascals when an honest man comes in sight,—these are things indeed which should make any man's life little worth having, unless he separate himself from the scandalous crowd; but it must not be in exile from his country.

I have not hitherto stated, except in general terms, the design to which these letters point, though it has been again and again defined, and it seems to me explicitly enough — the highest possible education, namely, of English men and women living by agriculture in their native land. Indeed, during these three past years I have not

hoped to do more than make my readers feel what mischiefs they have to conquer. It is time now to say more clearly what I want them to do.

The substantial wealth of man consists in the earth he cultivates, with its pleasant or serviceable animals and plants, and in the rightly produced work of his own hands. I mean to buy, for the St. George's Company, the first pieces of ground offered to me at fair price, (when the subscriptions enable me to give *any* price,)—to put them as rapidly as possible into order, and to settle upon them as many families as they can support, of young and healthy persons, on the condition that they do the best they can for their livelihood with their own hands, and submit themselves and their children to the rules written for them.

I do not care where the land is, nor of what quality. I would rather it should be poor, for I want space more than food. I will make the best of it that I can, at once, by wage-labour, under the best agricultural advice. It is easy now to obtain good counsel, and many of our landlords would willingly undertake such operations occasionally, but for the fixed notion that every improvement of land should at once pay, whereas the St. George's Company is to be consistently monastic in its principles of labour, and to work for the redemption of any desert land, without other idea of gain than the certainty of future good to others. I should best like a bit of marsh land of small value, which I would trench into alternate ridge and canal,

changing it all into solid land, and deep water, to be farmed in fish. If, instead, I get a rocky piece, I shall first arrange reservoirs for rain, then put what earth is sprinkled on it into workable masses; and ascertaining, in either case, how many mouths the gained spaces of ground will easily feed, put upon them families chosen for me by old landlords, who know their people, and can send me cheerful and honest ones, accustomed to obey orders, and live in the fear of God. Whether the fear be Catholic, or Church-of-England, or Presbyterian, I do not in the least care, so that the family be capable of any kind of sincere devotion; and conscious of the sacredness of order. If any young couples of the higher classes choose to accept such rough life, I would rather have them for tenants than any others.

Tenants, I say, and at long lease, if they behave well: with power eventually to purchase the piece of land they live on for themselves, if they can save the price of it; the rent they pay, meanwhile, being the tithe of the annual produce, to St. George's fund. The modes of the cultivation of the land are to be under the control of the overseer of the whole estate, appointed by the Trustees of the fund; but the tenants shall build their own houses to their own minds, under certain conditions as to materials and strength; and have for themselves the entire produce of the land, except the tithe aforesaid.

The children will be required to attend training schools for bodily exercise, and music, with such

other education as I have already described. Every household will have its library, given it from the fund, and consisting of a fixed number of volumes, —some constant, the others chosen by each family out of a list of permitted books, from which they afterwards may increase their library if they choose. The formation of this library for choice, by a republication of classical authors in standard forms, has long been a main object with me. No newspapers, nor any books but those named in the annually renewed lists, are to be allowed in any household. In time I hope to get a journal published, containing notice of any really important matters taking place in this or other countries, in the closely sifted truth of them.

The first essential point in the education given to the children will be the habit of instant, finely accurate, and totally unreasoning, obedience to their fathers, mothers, and tutors; the same precise and unquestioning submission being required from heads of families to the officers set over them. The second essential will be the understanding of the nature of honour, making the obedience solemn and constant; so that the slightest wilful violation of the laws of the society may be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and no less disgraceful than a soldier's recoiling from his place in a battle.

In our present state of utter moral disorganization, it might indeed seem as if it would be impossible either to secure obedience, or explain the sensation of honour; but the instincts of both are

native in man, and the roots of them cannot wither, even under the dust-heap of modern liberal opinions. My settlers, you observe, are to be young people, bred on old estates; my commandants will be veteran soldiers; and it will be soon perceived that pride based on servitude to the will of another is far loftier and happier than pride based on servitude to humour of one's own.

Each family will at first be put on its trial for a year, without any lease of the land: if they behave well, they shall have a lease for three years; if through that time they satisfy their officers, a life-long lease, with power to purchase.

I have already stated that no machines moved by artificial power are to be used on the estates of the society; wind, water, and animal force are to be the only motive powers employed, and there is to be as little trade or importation as possible; the utmost simplicity of life, and restriction of possession, being combined with the highest attainable refinement of temper and thought. Everything that the members of any household can sufficiently make for themselves, they are so to make, however clumsily; but the carpenter and smith, trained to perfectest work in wood and iron, are to be employed on the parts of houses and implements in which finish is essential to strength. The ploughshare and spade must be made by the smith, and the roof and floors by a carpenter; but the boys of the house must be able to make either a horseshoe, or a table.

Simplicity of life without coarseness, and delight in life without lasciviousness, are, under such conditions, not only possible to human creatures, but natural to them. I do not pretend to tell you straightforwardly all laws of nature respecting the conduct of men; but some of those laws I know, and will endeavour to get obeyed; others, as they are needful, will be in the sequel of such obedience ascertained. What final relations may take place between masters and servants, labourers and employers, old people and young, useful people and useless, in such a society, only experience can conclude; nor is there any reason to anticipate the conclusion. Some few things the most obstinate will admit, and the least credulous believe: that washed faces are healthier than dirty ones, whole clothes decenter than ragged ones, kind behaviour more serviceable than malicious, and pure air pleasanter than foul. Upon that much of 'philosophie positive' I mean to act; and, little by little, to define in these letters the processes of action. That it should be left to me to begin such a work, with only one man in England—Thomas Carlyle—to whom I can look for steady guidance, is alike wonderful and sorrowful to me; but as the thing is so, I can only do what seems to me necessary, none else coming forward to do it. For my own part, I entirely hate the whole business: I dislike having either power or responsibility; am ashamed to ask for money, and plagued in spending it. I don't want

to talk, nor to write, nor to advise or direct anybody. I am far more provoked at being thought foolish by foolish people, than pleased at being thought sensible by sensible people; and the average proportion of the numbers of each is not to my advantage. If I could find anyone able to carry on the plan instead of me, I never should trouble myself about it more; and even now, it is only with extreme effort and chastisement of my indolence that I go on: but, unless I am struck with palsy, I do not seriously doubt my perseverance, until I find somebody able to take up the matter in the same mind, and with a better heart.

The laws required to be obeyed by the families living on the land will be,—with some relaxation and modification, so as to fit them for English people,—those of Florence in the fourteenth century. In what additional rules may be adopted, I shall follow, for the most part, Bacon, or Sir Thomas More, under sanction always of the higher authority which of late the English nation has wholly set its strength to defy—that of the Founder of its Religion; nor without due acceptance of what teaching was given to the children of God by their Father, before the day of Christ, of which, for present ending, read and attend to these following quiet words.*

* The close of the ninth book of Plato's Republic. I use for the most part Mr. Jowett's translation, here and there modifying it

"'In what point of view, then, and on what ground shall a man be profited by injustice or intemperance or other baseness, even though he acquire money or power?'

'There is no ground on which this can be maintained.'

'What shall he profit if his injustice be undetected? for he who is undetected only gets worse, whereas he who is detected and punished has the brutal part of his nature silenced and humanized; the greater element in him is liberated, and his whole soul is perfected and ennobled by the acquirement of justice and temperance and wisdom, more than the body ever is by receiving gifts of beauty, strength, and health, in proportion as the soul is more honourable than the body.'

'Certainly,' he said.

'Will not, then, the man of understanding, gather all that is in him, and stretch himself like a bent bow to this aim of life; and, in the first place, honour studies which thus chastise and deliver his soul in perfection; and despise others?'

'Clearly,' he said.

'In the next place, he will keep under his body, and so far will he be from yielding to brutal and irrational pleasure,* that he will not even first look

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in my own arbitrarily dogged or diffuse way of Englishing passages of complex significance.

* Plato does not mean here, merely dissipation of a destructive kind, (as the next sentence shows,) but also healthy animal stupidities, as our hunting, shooting, and the like.

to bodily health as his main object, nor desire to be fair, or strong, or well, unless he is likely thereby to gain temperance; but he will be always desirous of preserving the harmony of the body for the sake of the concord of the soul?'

'Certainly,' he replied, 'that he will, if he is indeed taught by the Muses.'

'And he will also observe the principle of classing and concord in the acquisition of wealth; and will not, because the mob beatify him, increase his endless load of wealth to his own infinite harm?'

'I think not,' he said.

'He will look at the city which is within him, and take care to avoid any change of his own institutions, such as might arise either from abundance or from want; and he will duly regulate his acquisition and expense, in so far as he is able?'

'Very true.'

'And, for the same reason, he will accept such honours as he deems likely to make him a better man; but those which are likely to loosen his possessed habit, whether private or public honours, he will avoid?'

'Then, if this be his chief care, he will not be a politician?'

'By the dog of Egypt, he will! in the city which is his own, though in his native country perhaps not, unless some providential accident should occur.'

'I understand; you speak of that city of which

we are the founders, and which exists in idea only, for I do not think there is such an one anywhere on earth ?'

'In heaven,' I replied, 'there is laid up a pattern of such a city; and he who desires may behold this, and, beholding, govern himself accordingly. But whether there really is, or ever will be, such an one, is of no importance to him, for he will act accordingly to the laws of that city and of no other ?'

'True,' he said."

LETTER XXXVIII

"CHILDREN, HAVE YOU HERE ANY MEAT?"

HERNE HILL,
December, 1873.

THE laws of Florence in the fourteenth century, for us in the nineteenth!

Even so, good reader. You have, perhaps, long imagined that the judges of Israel, and heroes of Greece, the consuls of Rome, and the dukes of Venice, the powers of Florence, and the kings of England, were all merely the dim foreshadowings and obscure prophesyings of the advent of the Jones and Robinson of the future: demi-gods revealed in your own day, whose demi-divine votes, if luckily coincident upon any subject, become totally divine, and establish the ordinances thereof, for ever.

You will find it entirely otherwise, gentlemen, whether of the suburb, or centre. Laws small and great, for ever unchangeable;—irresistible by all the force of Robinson, and unimprovable by finest jurisprudence of Jones, have long since been known, and, by wise nations, obeyed. Out of the statute books of one of these I begin with an apparently unimportant order, but the sway of it cuts deep.

"No person whatsoever shall buy fish, to sell it again, either in the market of Florence, or in any markets in the state of Florence."

It is one of many such laws, entirely abolishing the profession of middleman, or costermonger of perishable articles of food, in the city of the Lily.

"Entirely abolishing;—nonsense!" thinks your modern commercial worship. "Who was to prevent private contract?"

Nobody, my good sir;—there is, as you very justly feel, no power in law whatever to prevent private contract. No quantity of laws, penalties, or constitutions, can be of the slightest use to a public inherently licentious and deceitful. There is no legislation for liars and traitors. They cannot be prevented from the pit; the earth finally swallows them. They find their level against all embankment—soak their way down, irrestrainably, to the gutter grating;—happiest the nation that most rapidly so gets rid of their stench. There is no law, I repeat, for these, but gravitation. Organic laws can only be serviceable to, and in general will only be written by, a public of honourable citizens, loyal to their state, and faithful to each other.

The profession of middleman was then, by civic consent, and formal law, rendered impossible in Florence with respect to fish. What advantage the modern blessed possibility of such mediatorial function brings to our hungry multitudes; and how

the miraculous draught of fishes, which living St. Peter discerns, and often dexterously catches—"the shoals of them like shining continents," (said Carlyle to me, only yesterday,)—are by such apostolic succession miraculously diminished, instead of multiplied; and, instead of baskets full of fragments taken up from the ground, baskets full of whole fish laid down on it, lest perchance any hungry person should cheaply eat of the same,—here is a pleasant little account for you, by my good and simple clergyman's wife. It would have been better still, if I had not been forced to warn her that I wanted it for Fors, which of course took the sparkle out of her directly. Here is one little naughty bit of private preface, which really must go with the rest. "I have written my little letter about the fish trade, and L. says it is all right. I am afraid you won't think there is anything in it worth putting in Fors, as I really know very little about it, and absolutely nothing that every one else does not know, except ladies, who generally never trouble about anything, but scold their cooks, and abuse the fishmongers —when they cannot pay the weekly bills easily." (After this we are quite proper.)

"The poor fishermen who toil all through these bitter nights, and the retail dealer who carries heavy baskets, or drags a truck so many weary miles along the roads, get but a poor living out of their labour; but what are called 'fish salesmen,' who by reason of their command of capital

keep entire command of the London markets, are making enormous fortunes.

"When you ask the fishermen why they do not manage better for themselves at the present demand for fish, they explain how helpless they are in the hands of what they call 'the big men.' Some fishermen at Aldborough, who have a boat of their own, told my brother that one season, when the sea seemed full of herrings, they saw in the newspapers how dear they were in London, and resolved to make a venture on their own account; so they spent all their available money in the purchase of a quantity of the right sort of baskets, and, going out to sea, filled them all,—putting the usual five hundred lovely fresh fish in each, —sent them straight up to London by train, to the charge of a salesman they knew of, begging him to send them into the market and do the best he could for them. But he was very angry with the fishermen; and wrote them word that the market was quite sufficiently stocked; that if more fish were sent in, *the prices would go down;* that he should not allow their fish to be sold at all; and, if they made a fuss about it, he would not send their baskets back, and would make them pay the carriage. As it was, he returned them, after a time; but the poor men never received one farthing for their thousands of nice fish, and only got a scolding for having dared to try and do without the agents who buy the fish from the boats at whatever price they choose to settle amongst themselves.

"When we were at Yarmouth this autumn, the enormous abundance of herrings on the fish quay was perfectly wonderful; it must be, (I should think,) two hundred yards long, and is capable of accommodating the unloading of a perfect fleet of boats. The 'swills,' as they call the baskets, each containing five hundred fish, were side by side, touching each other, all over this immense space, and men were shovelling salt about, with spades, over heaps of fish, previous to packing at once in boxes. I said, 'How surprised our poor people would be to see such a sight, after constantly being obliged to pay three-halfpence for every herring they buy.' An old fisherman answered me, saying, 'No one need pay that, ma'am, if we could get the fish to them; we could have plenty more boats, and plenty more fish, if we could have them taken where the poor people could get them.' We brought home a hundred dried herrings, for which we paid ten shillings; when we asked if we might buy some lovely mackerel on the Fish Quay, they said, (the fishermen,) that they were not allowed to sell them there, except all at once. Since then, I have read an account of a Royal Commission having been investigating the subject of the fishery for some time past, and the result of its inquiries seems to prove that it is inexhaustible, and that in the North Sea it is always harvest-time.*

* Not quite so, gentlemen of the Royal Commission. Harvests, no less than sales, and fishermen no less than salesmen, need

"When I told our fishmonger all about it, he said I was quite right about the 'big men' in London, and added, 'They will not let us have the fish under their own prices; and if it is so plentiful that they cannot sell it all at that, they have it thrown away, or carted off for manure; sometimes sunk in the river. If we could only get it here, my trade would be twice what it is, for, except sprats, the poor can seldom buy fish now.'

"I asked him if the new Columbia Market was of no use in making things easier, but he said, 'No;'

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regulation by just human law. Here is a piece of news, for instance, from Glasgow, concerning Loch Fyne:—"Owing to the permission to fish for herring by trawling, which not only scrapes up the spawn from the bottom, but catches great quantities of the fry, which are useless for market, and only fit for manure, it is a fact that, whereas Loch Fyne used to be celebrated for containing the finest herrings to be caught anywhere, and thousands and tens of thousands of boxes used to be exported from Inverary, there are not now enough caught there to *enable them to export a single box*, and the quantity caught lower down the loch, near its mouth (and every year the herring are being driven farther and farther down) is not a tithe of what it used to be. Such a thing as a Loch Fyne herring (of the old size and quality) cannot be had now in Glasgow for any money, and this is only a type of the destruction which trawling, and too short close-time, are causing to all the west-coast fishing. Whiting Bay, Arran, has been rid of its whiting by trawling on the spawning coast opposite. The cupidity of careless fishers, unchecked by beneficial law, is here also 'killing the goose that lays the golden eggs,' and herring of any kind are *very* scarce and very bad in Glasgow, at a penny and sometimes twopence each. Professor Huxley gave his sanction to trawling, in a Government Commission, I am told, some years ago, and it has been allowed ever since. I will tell you something similar about the seal-fishing off Newfoundland, another time."

that these salesmen had got that into their hands also; and were so rich that they would keep any number of markets in their own hands. A few hundred pounds sacrificed any day to keep up the prices they think well worth their while."

What do you think of that, by way of Free-trade?—my British-never-never-never-will-be-slaves,—hey? Free-trade; and the Divine Law of Supply and Demand; and the Sacred Necessity of Competition, and what not;—and here's a meek little English housewife who can't get leave, on her bended knees, from Sultan Costermonger, to eat a fresh herring at Yarmouth! and must pay three-halfpence apiece, for his leave to eat them anywhere;—and you, you simpletons—Fishermen, indeed!—Cod's heads and shoulders, say rather,—meekly receiving back your empty baskets; your miracle of loaves and fishes executed for you by the Costermongering Father of the Faithful, in that thimblerig manner!

"But haven't you yourself been hard against competition, till now? and haven't *you* always wanted to regulate prices?"

Yes, my good SS. Peter and Andrew!—very certainly I want to regulate prices; and very certainly I will, as to such things as I sell, or have the selling of. I should like to hear of anybody's getting this letter for less than tenpence!—and if you will send *me* some fish to sell for you, perhaps I may even resolve that they shall be sold at twopence each, or else made manure of,—like these

very costermongers; but the twopence shall go into your pockets—not mine; which you will find a very pleasant and complete difference in principle between his Grace the Costermonger and me; and, secondly, if I raise the price of a herring to twopence, it will be because I know that people have been in some way misusing them, or wasting them; and need to get fewer for a time; or will eat twopenny herrings at fashionable tables, (when they wouldn't touch half-penny ones,) and so give the servants no reason to turn up their noses at them.* I may have twenty such good reasons for fixing the price of your fish; but not one of them will be his Grace the Costermonger's. All that I want you to see is, not only the possibility of regulating prices, but the fact that they *are* now regulated, and regulated by rascals, while all the world is bleating out its folly about Supply and Demand.

"Still, even in your way, you would be breaking the laws of Florence, anyhow, and buying to sell again?" Pardon me: I should no more buy your fish than a butcher's boy buys his master's mutton. I should simply carry your fish for you where I knew it was wanted; being as utterly your servant in the matter as if I were one of your own lads sent dripping up to the town with basket on back. And I should be paid, as your servant, so much wages; (not *commission*, observe,) making bargains

* In my aunt's younger days, at Perth, the servants used regularly to make bargain that they should not be forced to dine on salmon more than so many times a week.

far away for you, and many another Saunders Mucklebackit, just as your wife makes them, up the hill at Monkbarns; and no more buying the fish, to sell again, than she.

"Well, but where could we get anybody to do this?"

Have you no sons then?—or, among them, none whom you can take from the mercy of the sea, and teach to serve you mercifully on the land?

It is not that way, however, that the thing will be done. It must be done for you by gentlemen. They may stagger on perhaps a year or two more in their vain ways; but the day *must* come when your poor little honest puppy, whom his people have been wanting to dress up in a surplice, and call, "The to be Feared," that he might have pay enough, by tithe or tax, to marry a pretty girl, and live in a parsonage,—some poor little honest wretch of a puppy, I say, will eventually get it into his glossy head that he would be incomparably more reverend to mortals, and acceptable to St. Peter and all Saints, as a true monger of sweet fish, than a false fisher for rotten souls; and that his wife would be incomparably more 'lady-like'—not to say Madonna-like—marching beside him in purple stockings and sabots—or even frankly barefoot—with her creel full of caller herring on her back, than in administering any quantity of Ecclesiastical scholarship to her Sunday-schools.

"How dreadful—how atrocious!"—thinks the

tender clerical lover. "*My* wife walk with a fish-basket on her back!"

Yes, you young scamp, yours. You were going to lie to the Holy Ghost, then, were you, only that she might wear satin slippers and be called a 'lady'? Suppose, instead of fish, I were to ask her and you to carry coals. Have you ever read your Bible carefully enough to wonder where Christ got them from, to make His fire, (when He was so particular about St. Peter's dinner, and St. John's)? Or if I asked you to be hewers of wood, and drawers of water;—would that also seem intolerable to you? My poor clerical friends, God was never more in the burning bush of Sinai than He would be in every crackling faggot (cut with your own hands) that you warmed a poor hearth with: nor did that woman of Samaria ever give Him to drink more surely than you may, from every stream and well in this your land, that you can keep pure.

20*th Dec.*—To hew wood—to draw water;—you think these base businesses, do you? and that you are noble, as well as sanctified, in binding faggot-burdens on poor men's backs, which you will not touch with your own fingers;—and in preaching the efficacy of baptism inside the church, by yonder stream (under the first bridge of the Seven Bridge Road here at Oxford,) while the sweet waters of it are choked with dust and dung, within ten fathoms from your font;—and in giving benediction with two fingers and your thumb, of a superfine quality, to the Marquis of B.? Honester

benediction, and more efficacious, can be had cheaper, gentlemen, in the existing market. Under my own system of regulating prices, I gave an Irishwoman twopence yesterday for two oranges, of which fruit—under pressure of competition—she was ready to supply me with three for a penny. "The Lord Almighty take you to eternal glory!" said she.

You lawyers, also,—distributors, by your own account, of the quite supreme blessing of Justice, —you are not so busily eloquent in her cause but that some of your sweet voices might be spared to Billingsgate, though the river air might take the curl out of your wigs, and so diminish that æsthetic claim, which, as aforesaid, you still hold on existence. But you will bring yourselves to an end soon,—wigs and all,—unless you think better of it.

I will dismiss at once, in this letter, the question of regulation of prices, and return to it no more, except in setting down detailed law.

Any rational group of persons, large or small, living in war or peace, will have its commissariat; —its officers for provision of food. Famine in a fleet, or an army, may sometimes be inevitable; but in the event of *national* famine, the officers of the commissariat should be starved the first. God has given to man corn, wine, cheese, and honey, all preservable for a number of years;—filled His seas with inexhaustible salt, and incalculable fish; filled the woods with beasts, the winds with birds, and the fields with fruit. Under these circumstances,

the stupid human brute stands talking metaphysics, and expects to be fed by the law of Supply and Demand. I do not say that I shall always succeed in regulating prices, or quantities, absolutely to my mind; but in the event of any scarcity of provision, rich tables shall be served like the poorest, and—we will see.

The price of every other article will be founded on the price of food. The price of what it takes a day to produce, will be a day's maintenance; of what it takes a week to produce, a week's maintenance,—such maintenance being calculated according to the requirements of the occupation, and always with a proportional surplus for saving.

"How am I to know exactly what a day's maintenance is?" I don't want to know exactly. I don't know exactly how much dinner I ought to eat; but, on the whole, I eat enough, and not too much. And I shall not know 'exactly' how much a painter ought to have for a picture. It may be a pound or two under the mark—a pound or two over. On the average it will be right,—that is to say, his decent keep* during the number of

* As for instance, and in farther illustration of the use of herrings, here is some account of the maintenance of young painters and lawyers in Edinburgh, sixty years since, sent me by the Third Fors; and good Dr. Brown, in an admirable sketch of the life of an admirable Scottish artist, says: "Raeburn (Sir Henry) was left an orphan at six, and was educated in Heriot's Hospital. At fifteen he was apprenticed to a goldsmith; but after his time was out, set himself entirely to portrait painting. About this time he became acquainted with the famous cynic, lawyer, and wit, John Clerk, afterwards Lord Eldon, then a young advocate. Both were

days' work that are properly accounted for in the production.

"How am I to hinder people from giving more if they like?"

People whom I catch doing as they like will generally have to leave the estate.

"But how is it to be decided to which of two purchasers, each willing to give its price, and more, anything is to belong?"

In various ways, according to the nature of the thing sold, and circumstances of sale. Sometimes by priority; sometimes by privilege; sometimes by lot; and sometimes by auction, at which whatever excess of price, above its recorded value, the article brings, shall go to the national treasury. So that nobody will ever buy anything to make a profit on it.

11*th January*, 1874.—Thinking I should be the better of a look at the sea, I have come down to an old watering-place, where one used to be able to get into a decent little inn, and possess one's self of a parlour with a bow window looking out on the beach, a pretty carpet, and a print or two of revenue cutters, and the Battle of the Nile. One could have a chop and some good cheese for dinner; fresh cream and cresses for breakfast, and a plate of shrimps.

I find myself in the Umfraville Hotel, a quarter

poor. Young Clerk asked Raeburn to dine at his lodgings. Coming in, he found the landlady laying the cloth, and setting down two dishes, one containing three herrings, and the other three potatoes. 'Is this a'?' said John. 'Ay, it's a'.' 'A'! didna I tell ye, woman, that a gentleman is to dine wi' me, and that ye were to get six herrin' and six potatoes?'"

of a mile long by a furlong deep; in a ghastly room, five-and-twenty feet square, and eighteen high,—that is to say, just four times as big as I want, and which I can no more light with my candles in the evening than I could the Peak cavern. A gas apparatus in the middle of it serves me to knock my head against, but I take good care not to light it, or I should soon be stopped from my evening's work by a headache, and be unfit for my morning's business besides. The carpet is threadbare, and has the look of having been spat upon all over. There is only one window, of four huge panes of glass, through which one commands a view of a plaster balcony, some ornamental iron railings, an esplanade,—and,—well, I suppose,—in the distance, that is really the sea, where it used to be. I am ashamed to ask for shrimps,—not that I suppose I could get any if I did. There's no cream, "because, except in the season, we could only take so small a quantity, sir." The bread's stale, because it's Sunday; and the cheese, last night, was of the cheapest tallow sort. The bill will be at least three times my old bill;—I shall get no thanks from anybody for paying it;—and this is what the modern British public thinks is "living in style." But the most comic part of all the improved arrangements is that I can only have codlings for dinner, because all the cod goes to London, and none of the large fishing-boats dare sell a fish, here.

And now but a word or two more, final, as to the fixed price of this book.

A sensible and worthy tradesman writes to me in very earnest terms of expostulation, blaming me for putting the said book out of the reach of most of the persons it is meant for, and asking me how I can expect, for instance, the working men round him (in Lancashire),—who have been in the habit of strictly ascertaining that they have value for their money,—to buy, for tenpence, what they know might be given them for twopence-halfpenny.

Answer first:

My book is meant for no one who cannot reach it. If a man with all the ingenuity of Lancashire in his brains, and breed of Lancashire in his body; with all the steam and coal power in Lancashire to back his ingenuity and muscle; all the press of literary England vomiting the most valuable information at his feet; with all the tenderness of charitable England aiding him in his efforts, and ministering to his needs; with all the liberality of republican Europe rejoicing in his dignities as a man and a brother; and with all the science of enlightened Europe directing his opinions on the subject of the materials of the Sun, and the origin of his species; if, I say, a man so circumstanced, assisted, and informed, living besides in the richest country of the globe, and, from his youth upwards, having been in the habit of 'seeing that he had value for his money,' cannot, as the upshot and net result of all, now afford to pay me tenpence a month—or an annual half-sovereign, for my literary labour,—in Heaven's name, let him buy the best

reading he can for twopence-halfpenny. For that sum, I clearly perceive he can at once provide himself with two penny illustrated newspapers and one halfpenny one,—full of art, sentiment, and the Tichborne trial. He can buy a quarter of the dramatic works of Shakespeare, or a whole novel of Sir Walter Scott's. Good value for his money, he thinks;—reads one of them through, and in all probability loses some five years of the eyesight of his old age; which he does not, with all his Lancashire ingenuity, reckon as part of the price of his cheap book. But how has he read? There is an act of Midsummer Night's Dream printed in a page. Steadily and dutifully, as a student should, he reads his page. The lines slip past his eyes, and mind, like sand in an hour-glass; he has some dim idea at the end of the act that he has been reading about Fairies, and Flowers, and Asses. Does he know what a Fairy is? Certainly not. Does he know what a flower is? He has perhaps never seen one wild, or happy, in his life. Does he even know—quite distinctly, inside and out—what an Ass is?

But, answer second. Whether my Lancashire friends need any aid to their discernment of what is good or bad in literature, I do not know;—but I mean to give them the best help I can; and, therefore, not to allow them to have for twopence what I know to be worth tenpence. For here is another law of Florence, still concerning fish, which is transferable at once to literature.

"Eel of the lake shall be sold for three soldi a pound; and eel of the common sort for a soldo and a half."

And eel of a bad sort was not allowed to be sold at all.

"Eel of the lake," I presume, was that of the Lake of Bolsena; Pope Martin IV. died of eating too many, in spite of their high price. You observe I do not reckon my Fors Eel to be of Bolsena; I put it at the modest price of a soldo a pound, or English tenpence. One cannot be precise in such estimates; one can only obtain rude approximations. Suppose, for instance, you read the *Times* newspaper for a week, from end to end; your aggregate of resultant useful information will certainly not be more than you may get out of a single number of Fors. But your *Times* for the week will cost you eighteenpence.

You borrow the *Times?* Borrow this then; till the days come when English people cease to think they can live by lending, or learn by borrowing.

I finish with copy of a bit of a private letter to the editor of an honestly managed country newspaper, who asked me to send him Fors.

"I find it on examining the subject for these last three years very closely—necessary to defy the entire principle of advertisement; and to make no concession of any kind whatsoever to the public press—even in the minutest particular. And this year I cease sending Fors to *any* paper whatsoever.

It *must* be bought by everyone who has it, editor or private person.

"If there are ten people in —— willing to subscribe a penny each for it, you can see it in turn; by no other means can I let it be seen. From friend to friend, or foe to foe, it must make its own way, or stand still, abiding its time."

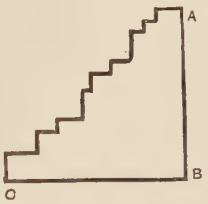
LETTER XXXIX

THE CART GOES BETTER, SO

On a foggy forenoon, two or three days ago, I wanted to make my way quickly from Hengler's Circus to Drury Lane Theatre, without losing time which might be philosophically employed; and therefore afoot, for in a cab I never can think of anything but how the driver is to get past whatever is in front of him.

On foot, then, I proceeded, and accordingly by a somewhat complex diagonal line, to be struck, as the stars might guide me, between Regent Circus and Covent Garden. I have never been able, by the way, to make any coachman understand that such diagonals were not always profitable. Coachmen, as far as I know them, always possess just enough geometry to feel that the hypotenuse is shorter than the two sides, but I never yet could get one to see that an hypotenuse constructed of cross streets in the manner of the line A C, had no advantage, in the matter of distance to be traversed, over the simple thoroughfares A B, B C, while it involved the loss of the momentum of the carriage, and a fresh start for

the cattle, at seventeen corners instead of one, not to mention the probability of a block at half a dozen of them, none the less frequent since underground railways, and more difficult to get out of, in consequence of the increasing discourtesy and diminishing patience of all human creatures.



Now here is just one of the pieces of practical geometry and dynamics which a modern schoolmaster, exercising his pupils on the positions of letters in the word Chillianwallah, would wholly despise. Whereas, in St. George's schools, it shall be very early learned, on a square and diagonal of actual road, with actual loaded wheelbarrow—first one-wheeled, and pushed; and secondly, two-wheeled, and pulled. And similarly, every bit of science the children learn shall be directly applied by them, and the use of it felt, which involves the truth of it being known in the best possible way, and without any debating thereof. And what they cannot apply they shall not be troubled to know. I am not the least desirous that they should know so much even of the sun as that it stands still, (if it does). They may remain, for anything I care, under the most simple conviction that it gets up every morning and goes to bed every night; but they shall assuredly possess the applicable science of the hour it gets up at, and goes to bed at, on any day of the year, because they will have to

regulate their own gettings up and goings to bed upon those solar proceedings.

Well, to return to Regent Street. Being afoot, I took the complex diagonal, because by wise regulation of one's time and angle of crossing, one may indeed move on foot in an economically drawn line, provided one does not miss its main direction. As it chanced, I took my line correctly enough; but found so much to look at and think of on the way, that I gained no material advantage. First, I could not help stopping to consider the metaphysical reasons of the extreme gravity and self-abstraction of Archer Street. Then I was delayed a while in Prince's Street, Soho, wondering what Prince it had belonged to. Then I got through Gerrard Street into Little Newport Street; and came there to a dead pause, to think why, in these days of division of mechanical labour, there should be so little space for classification of commodities, as to require oranges, celery, butchers' meat, cheap hosiery, soap, and salt fish, to be all sold in the same alley.

Some clue to the business was afforded me by the sign of the 'Hôtel de l'Union des Peuples' at the corner, "bouillon et bœuf à emporter;" but I could not make out why, in spite of the union of people, the provision merchant at the opposite corner had given up business, and left his house with all its upper windows broken, and its door nailed up. Finally, I was stopped at the corner of Cranbourne Street by a sign over a large shop advising me to buy some "screwed boots and shoes." I am too

shy to go in and ask, on such occasions, what screwed boots are, or at least too shy to come out again without buying any, if the people tell me politely, and yet I couldn't get the question what such things may be out of my head, and nearly got run over in consequence, before attaining the Arcadian shelter of Covent Garden. I was but just in time to get my tickets for Jack in the Box, on the day I wanted, and put them carefully in the envelope with those I had been just securing at Hengler's for my fifth visit to Cinderella. For indeed, during the last three weeks, the greater part of my available leisure has been spent between Cinderella and Jack in the Box; with this curious result upon my mind, that the intermediate scenes of Archer Street and Prince's Street, Soho, have become to me merely as one part of the drama, or pantomime, which I happen to have seen last; or, so far as the difference in the appearance of men and things may compel me to admit some kind of specific distinction, I begin to ask myself, Which is the reality, and which the pantomime? Nay, it appears to me not of much moment which we choose to call Reality. Both are equally real; and the only question is whether the cheerful state of things which the spectators, especially the youngest and wisest, entirely applaud and approve at Hengler's and Drury Lane, must necessarily be interrupted always by the woful interlude of the outside world.

It is a bitter question to me, for I am myself now, hopelessly, a man of the world!—of that woful

outside one, I mean. It is now Sunday; half past eleven in the morning. Everybody about me is gone to church except the kind cook, who is straining a point of conscience to provide me with dinner. Everybody else is gone to church, to ask to be made angels of, and profess that they despise the world and the flesh, which I find myself always living in, (rather, perhaps, living, or endeavouring to live, in too little of the last). And I am left alone with the cat, in the world of sin.

But I scarcely feel less an outcast when I come out of the Circus, on week days, into my own world of sorrow. Inside the Circus, there have been wonderful Mr. Edward Cooke, and pretty Mademoiselle Aguzzi, and the three brothers Leonard, like the three brothers in a German story, and grave little Sandy, and bright and graceful Miss Hengler, all doing the most splendid feats of strength, and patience, and skill. There have been dear little Cinderella and her Prince, and all the pretty children beautifully dressed, taught thoroughly how to behave, and how to dance, and how to sit still, and giving everybody delight that looks at them; whereas, the instant I come outside the door, I find all the children about the streets ill-dressed, and ill-taught, and ill-behaved, and nobody cares to look at them. And then, at Drury Lane, there's just everything I want people to have always, got for them, for a little while; and they seem to enjoy them just as I should expect they would. Mushroom Common, with its lovely mushrooms,

white and gray, so finely set off by the incognita fairy's scarlet cloak; the golden land of plenty with furrow and sheath; Buttercup Green, with its flock of mechanical sheep, which the whole audience claps because they are of pasteboard, as they do the sheep in Little Red Riding Hood because they are alive; but in either case, must have them on the stage in order to be pleased with them, and never clap when they see the creatures in a field outside. They can't have enough, any more than I can, of the loving duet between Tom Tucker and little Bo Peep: they would make the dark fairy dance all night long in her amber light if they could; and yet contentedly return to what they call a necessary state of things outside, where their corn is reaped by machinery, and the only duets are between steam whistles. Why haven't they a steam whistle to whistle to them on the stage, instead of Miss Violet Cameron? Why haven't they a steam Jack in the Box to jump for them, instead of Mr. Evans? or a steam doll to dance for them, instead of Miss Kate Vaughan? They still seem to have human ears and eyes, in the Theatre; to know *there*, for an hour or two, that golden light, and song, and human skill and grace, are better than smoke-blackness, and shrieks of iron and fire, and monstrous powers of constrained elements. And then they return to their underground railroad, and say, 'This, behold,—this is the right way to move, and live in a real world.'

Very notable it is also that just as in these two

theatrical entertainments — the Church and the Circus,—the imaginative congregations still retain some true notions of the value of human and beautiful things, and don't have steam-preachers nor steam-dancers,—so also they retain some just notion of the truth, in moral things: Little Cinderella, for instance, at Hengler's, never thinks of offering her poor fairy Godmother a ticket from the Mendicity Society. She immediately goes and fetches her some dinner. And she makes herself generally useful, and sweeps the doorstep, and dusts the door;—and none of the audience think any the worse of her on that account. They think the worse of her proud sisters who make her do it. But when they leave the Circus, they never think for a moment of making *themselves* useful, like Cinderella. They forthwith play the proud sisters as much as they can; and try to make anybody else, who will, sweep their doorsteps. Also, at Hengler's, nobody advises Cinderella to write novels, instead of doing her washing, by way of bettering herself. The audience, gentle and simple, feel that the only chance she has of pleasing her Godmother, or marrying a prince, is in remaining patiently at her tub, as long as the Fates will have it so, heavy though it be. Again, in all dramatic representation of Little Red Riding Hood, everybody disapproves of the carnivorous propensities of the Wolf. They clearly distinguish there —as clearly as the Fourteenth Psalm, itself—between the class of animal which eats, and the class

of animal which is eaten. But once outside the theatre, they declare the whole human race to be universally carnivorous—and are ready themselves to eat up any quantity of Red Riding Hoods, body and soul, if they can make money by them.

And lastly,—at Hengler's and Drury Lane, see how the whole of the pleasure of life depends on the existence of Princes, Princesses, and Fairies. One never hears of a Republican pantomime; one never thinks Cinderella would be a bit better off if there were no princes. The audience understand that though it is not every good little housemaid who can marry a prince, the world would not be the least pleasanter, for the rest, if there were no princes to marry.

Nevertheless, it being too certain that the sweeping of doorsteps diligently will not in all cases enable a pretty maiden to drive away from said doorsteps, for evermore, in a gilded coach,—one has to consider what may be the next best for her. And next best, or, in the greater number of cases, best altogether, will be that Love, with his felicities, should himself enter over the swept and garnished steps, and abide with her in her own life, such as it is. And since St. Valentine's grace is with us, at this season, I will finish my Fors, for this time, by carrying on our little romance of the Broom-maker, to the place in which he unexpectedly finds it. In which romance, while we may perceive the principal lesson intended by the author to be that the delights and prides of affectionate married life are consistent

with the humblest station, (or may even be more easily found there than in a higher one,) we may for ourselves draw some farther conclusions which the good Swiss pastor only in part intended. We may consider in what degree the lightening of the wheels of Hansli's cart, when they drave heavily by the wood of Muri, corresponds to the change of the English highway into Mount Parnassus, for Sir Philip Sidney; and if the correspondence be not complete, and some deficiency in the divinest power of Love be traceable in the mind of the simple person as compared to that of the gentle one, we may farther consider, in due time, how, without help from any fairy Godmother, we may make Cinderella's life gentle to her, as well as simple; and, without taking the peasant's hand from his labour, make his heart leap with joy as pure as a king's.*

Well, said Hansli, I'll help you; give me your bag; I'll put it among my brooms, and nobody will see it. Everybody knows *me*. Not a soul will think I've got your shoes underneath there. You've only to tell me where to leave them—or indeed where to stop for you, if you like. You can follow a little way off;—nobody will think we have anything to do with each other.

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* If to any reader, looking back on the history of Europe for the last four centuries, this sentence seems ironical, let him be assured that for the causes which made it seem so, during the last four centuries, the end of kinghood has come.

The young girl made no compliments.*

You are really very good,† said she, with a more serene face. She brought her packet, and Hans hid it so nicely that a cat couldn't have seen it.

Shall I push, or help you to pull? asked the young girl, as if it had been a matter of course that she should also do her part in the work.

As you like best, though you needn't mind; it isn't a pair or two of shoes that will make my cart much heavier. The young girl began by pushing; but that did not last long. Presently she found herself‡ in front, pulling also by the pole.

It seems to me that the cart goes better so, said she. As one ought to suppose, she pulled with all her strength; that which nevertheless did not put her out of breath, nor hinder her from relating all she had in her head, or heart.

They got to the top of the hill of Stalden without Hansli's knowing how that had happened: the

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* Untranslateable. It means, she made no false pretence of reluctance, and neither politely nor feebly declined what she meant to accept. But the phrase might be used of a person accepting with ungraceful eagerness, or want of sense of obligation. A slight sense of this simplicity is meant by our author to be here included in the expression.

† "Trop bon." It is a little more than 'very good,' but not at all equivalent to our English 'too good.'

‡ "Se trouva." Untranslateable. It is very little more than 'was' in front. But that little more,—the slight sense of not knowing quite how she got there,—is necessary to mark the undercurrent of meaning; she goes behind the cart first, thinking it more modest; but presently, nevertheless, 'finds herself' in front; "the cart goes better, so."

long alley* seemed to have shortened itself by half.

There, one made one's dispositions; the young girl stopped behind, while Hansli, with her bag and his brooms, entered the town without the least difficulty, where he remitted her packet to the young girl, also without any accident; but they had scarcely time to say a word to each other before the press† of people, cattle, and vehicles separated them. Hansli had to look after his cart, lest it should be knocked to bits. And so ended the acquaintanceship for that day. This vexed Hansli not a little; howbeit he didn't think long about it. We cannot (more's the pity) affirm that the young girl had made an ineffaceable impression upon him,—and all the less, that she was not altogether made for producing ineffaceable impressions. She was a stunted little girl, with a broad face. That which she had of best was a good heart, and an indefatigable ardour for work; but those are things which, externally, are not very remarkable, and many people don't take much notice of them.

Nevertheless, the next Tuesday, when Hansli saw himself‡ at his cart again, he found it extremely heavy.

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* There used to be an avenue of tall trees, about a quarter of a mile long, on the Thun road, just at the brow of the descent to the bridge of the Aar, at the lower end of the main street of Berne.

† "Cohue." Confused and moving mass. We have no such useful word.

‡ "Se revit." It would not be right to say here 'se trouva,' because there is no surprise, or discovery, in the doing once again

I wouldn't have believed, said he to himself, what a difference there is between two pulling, and one.

Will she be there again, I wonder, thought he, as he came near the little wood of Muri. I would take her bag very willingly if she would help me to pull. Also the road is nowhere so ugly as between here and the town.*

And behold that it precisely happened that the young girl was sitting there upon the same bench, all the same as eight days before; only with the difference that she was not crying.

Have you got anything for me to carry to-day? asked Hansli, who found his cart at once became a great deal lighter at the sight of the young girl.

It is not only for that that I have waited, answered she; even if I had had nothing to carry to the town, I should have come, all the same; for eight days ago I wasn't able to thank you; nor to ask if that cost anything.

A fine question! said Hansli. Why, you served me for a second donkey; and yet I never asked how much I owed you for helping me to pull! So, as all that went of itself, the young girl brought her bundle, and Hansli hid it, and she went to put

what is done every week. But one may nevertheless contemplate oneself, and the situation, from a new point of view. Hansli 'se revit'—reviewed himself, literally; a very proper operation, every now and then, for everybody.

* A slight difference between the Swiss and English peasant is marked here; to the advantage of the former. At least, I imagine an English Hansli would not have known, even in love, whether the road was ugly or pretty.

herself at the pole as if she had known it all by heart. I had got a little way from home, said she, before it came into my head that I ought to have brought a cord to tie to the cart behind, and that would have gone better; but another time, if I return, I won't forget.

This association for mutual help found itself, then, established, without any long diplomatic debates, and in the most simple manner. And, that day, it chanced that they were also able to come back together as far as the place where their roads parted; all the same, they were so prudent as not to show themselves together before the gens-d'armes at the town gates.

And now for some time Hansli's mother had been quite enchanted with her son. It seemed to her he was more gay, she said. He whistled and sang, now, all the blessed day; and tricked himself up, so that he could never have done.* Only just the other day he had bought a great-coat of drugget, in which he had nearly the air of a real counsellor. But she could not find any fault with him for all that; he was so good to her that certainly the good God must reward him;—as for herself, she was in no way of doing it, but could do nothing but pray for him. Not that you are to think, said she, that he puts everything into his clothes; he has some money too. If God spares his life, I'll wager that

* "Se requinquait à n'en plus finir." Entirely beyond English rendering.

one day he'll come to have a cow:—he has been talking of a goat ever so long; but it's not likely I shall be spared to see it. And, after all, I don't pretend to be sure it will ever be.

Mother, said Hans one day, I don't know how it is; but either the cart gets heavier, or I'm not so strong as I was; for some time I've scarcely been able to manage it. It is getting really too much for me; especially on the Berne road, where there are so many hills.

I dare say, said the mother; aussi, why do you go on loading it more every day? I've been fretting about you many a time; for one always suffers for over-work when one gets old. But you must take care. Put a dozen or two of brooms less on it, and it will roll again all right.

That's impossible, mother; I never have enough as it is, and I haven't time to go to Berne twice a week.

But, Hansli, suppose you got a donkey. I've heard say they are the most convenient beasts in the world: they cost almost nothing, eat almost nothing, and anything one likes to give them; and that's * as strong as a horse, without counting that one can make something of the milk,—not that I want any, but one may speak of it.†

* "Ça." Note the peculiar character and value, in modern French, of this general and slightly depreciatory pronoun, essentially a republican word,—hurried, inconsiderate, and insolent. The popular chant 'ça ira' gives the typical power.

† "C'est seulement pour dire." I've been at least ten minutes trying to translate it, and can't.

No, mother, said Hansli,—they're as self-willed as devils: sometimes one can't get them to do anything at all; and then what I should do with a donkey the other five days of the week! No, mother;—I was thinking of a wife,—hey, what say you?

But, Hansli, I think a goat or a donkey would be much better. A wife! What sort of idea is that that has come into your head? What would you do with a wife?

Do! said Hansli; what other people do, I suppose; and then, I thought she would help me to draw the cart, which goes ever so much better with another hand:—without counting that she could plant potatoes between times, and help me to make my brooms, which I couldn't get a goat or a donkey to do.

But, Hansli, do you think to find one, then, who will help you to draw the cart, and will be clever enough to do all that? asked the mother, searchingly.

Oh, mother, there's one who has helped me already often with the cart, said Hansli, and who would be good for a great deal besides; but as to whether she would marry me or not, I don't know, for I haven't asked her. I thought that I would tell you first.

You rogue of a boy, what's that you tell me there? I don't understand a word of it, cried the mother. You too!—are you also like that? The good God Himself might have told me, and I wouldn't have believed Him. What's that you say?

—you've got a girl to help you to pull the cart! A pretty business to engage her for! Ah well,—trust men after this!

Thereupon Hansli put himself to recount the history; and how that had happened quite by chance; and how that girl was just expressly made for him: a girl as neat as a clock,—not showy, not extravagant,—and who would draw the cart better even than a cow could. But I haven't spoken to her of anything, however. All the same, I think I'm not disagreeable to her. Indeed, she has said to me once or twice that she wasn't in a hurry to marry; but if she could manage it, so as not to be worse off than she was now, she wouldn't be long making up her mind. She knows, for that matter, very well also why she is in the world. Her little brothers and sisters are growing up after her; and she knows well how things go, and how the youngest are always made the most of, for one never thinks of thanking the elder ones for the trouble they've had in bringing them up.

All that didn't much displease the mother; and the more she ruminated over these unexpected matters, the more it all seemed to her very proper. Then she put herself to make inquiries, and learned that nobody knew the least harm of the girl. They told her she did all she could to help her parents; but that with the best they could do, there wouldn't be much to fish for. Ah, well: it's all the better, thought she; for then neither of them can have much to say to the other.

The next Tuesday, while Hansli was getting his cart ready, his mother said to him,

Well, speak to that girl: if she consents, so will I; but I can't run after her. Tell her to come here on Sunday, that I may see her, and at least we can talk a little. If she is willing to be nice, it will all go very well. Aussi, it must happen some time or other, I suppose.

But, mother, it isn't written anywhere that it must happen, whether or no; and if it doesn't suit you, nothing hinders me from leaving it all alone.

Nonsense, child; don't be a goose. Hasten thee to set out; and say to that girl, that if she likes to be my daughter-in-law, I'll take her, and be very well pleased.

Hansli set out, and found the young girl. Once that they were pulling together, he at his pole, and she at her cord, Hansli put himself to say,

That certainly goes as quick again when there are thus two cattle at the same cart. Last Saturday I went to Thun by myself, and dragged all the breath out of my body.

Yes, I've often thought, said the young girl, that it was very foolish of you not to get somebody to help you; all the business would go twice as easily, and you would gain twice as much.

What would you have? said Hansli. Sometimes one thinks too soon of a thing, sometimes too late, —one's always mortal.* But now it really seems

* "On est toujours homme." The proverb is frequent among the French and Germans. The modesty of it is not altogether easy

to me that I should like to have somebody for a help; if you were of the same mind, you would be just the good thing for me. If that suits you, I'll marry you.

Well, why not,—if you don't think me too ugly nor too poor? answered the young girl. Once you've got me, it will be too late to despise me. As for me, I could scarcely fall in with a better chance. One always gets a husband,—but, aussi, of what sort? You are quite good enough * for me: you take care of your affairs, and I don't think you'll treat a wife like a dog.

My faith, she will be as much master as I; if she is not pleased that way, I don't know what more to do, said Hansli. And for other matters, I don't think you'll be worse off with me than you have been at home. If that suits you, come to see us on Sunday. It's my mother who told me to ask you, and to say that if you liked to be her daughter-in-law, she would be very well pleased.

Liked! But what could I want more? I am used to submit myself, and take things as they come, — worse to-day, better to-morrow, — sometimes more sour, sometimes less. I never have thought that a hard word made a hole in me, else by this time I shouldn't have had a bit of skin left

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to an English mind, and would be totally incomprehensible to an ordinary Scotch one.

* "Assez brave." Untranslateable, except by the old English sense of the word brave, and even that has more reference to outside show than the French word.

as big as a kreutzer. But, all the same, I must tell my people, as the custom is. For the rest, they won't give themselves any trouble about the matter. There are enough of us in the house: if any one likes to go, nobody will stop them.*

And, aussi, that was what happened. On Sunday the young girl really appeared at Rychiswyl. Hansli had given her very clear directions; nor had she to ask long before she was told where the broom-seller lived. The mother made her pass a good examination upon the garden and the kitchen; and would know what book of prayers she used, and whether she could read in the New Testament, and also in the Bible,† for it was very bad for the children, and it was always they who suffered, if the mother didn't know enough for that, said the old woman. The girl pleased her, and the affair was concluded.

You won't have a beauty there, said she to Hansli, before the young girl; nor much to crow about, in what she has got. But all that is of no consequence. It isn't beauty that makes the pot boil; and as for money, there's many a man who wouldn't marry a girl unless she was rich, who has had to pay his father-in-law's debts in the end.

* You are to note carefully the conditions of sentiment in family relationships implied both here, and in the bride's reference, farther on, to her godmother's children. Poverty, with St. Francis' pardon, is not always holy in its influence: yet a richer girl might have felt exactly the same, without being innocent enough to say so.

† I believe the reverend and excellent novelist would himself authorize the distinction; but Hansli's mother must be answerable for it to my Evangelical readers.

When one has health, and work, in one's arms, one gets along always. I suppose (turning to the girl) you have got two good chemises and two gowns, so that you won't be the same on Sunday and work-days?

Oh yes, said the young girl; you needn't give yourself any trouble about that. I've one chemise quite new, and two good ones besides,—and four others which, in truth, are rather ragged. But my mother said I should have another; and my father, that he would make me my wedding shoes, and they should cost me nothing. And with that I've a very nice godmother, who is sure to give me something fine;—perhaps a saucepan, or a frying-pan,—who knows? without counting that perhaps I shall inherit something from her some day. She has some children, indeed, but they may die.

Perfectly satisfied on both sides, but especially the girl, to whom Hansli's house, so perfectly kept in order, appeared a palace in comparison with her own home, full of children and scraps of leather, they separated, soon to meet again and quit each other no more. As no soul made the slightest objection, and the preparations were easy,—seeing that new shoes and a new chemise are soon stitched together,—within a month, Hansli was no more alone on his way to Thun. And the old cart went again as well as ever.

And they lived happily ever after? You shall hear. The story is not at an end; note only, in

the present phase of it, this most important point, that Hansli does not think of his wife as an expensive luxury, to be refused to himself unless under irresistible temptation. It is only the modern Pall-Mall-pattern Englishman who must 'abstain from the luxury of marriage' if he be wise. Hansli thinks of his wife, on the contrary, as a useful article, which he cannot any longer get on without. He gives us, in fact, a final definition of proper wifely quality,—"She will draw the cart better than a cow could."

LETTER XL

THE SCOTTISH FIRESIDE

I AM obliged to go to Italy this spring, and find beside me a mass of Fors material in arrear, needing various explanation and arrangement, for which I have no time. Fors herself must look to it, and my readers use their own wits in thinking over what she has looked to. I begin with a piece of Marmontel, which was meant to follow, 'in due time,' the twenty-first letter,—of which, please glance at the last four pages again. This following bit is from another story professing to give some account of Molière's Misanthrope, in his country life, after his last quarrel with Celimène. He calls on a country gentleman, M. de Laval, "and was received by him with the simple and serious courtesy which announces neither the need nor the vain desire of making new connections. Behold, said he, a man who does not surrender himself at once. I esteem him the more. He congratulated M. de Laval on the agreeableness of his solitude. You come to live here, he said to him, far from men, and you are very right to avoid them.

I, Monsieur! I do not avoid men; I am neither

so weak as to fear them, so proud as to despise them, nor so unhappy as to hate them.

This answer struck so home that Alceste was disconcerted by it; but he wished to sustain his debût, and began to satirize the world.

I have lived in the world like another, said M. de Laval, and I have not seen that it was so wicked. There are vices and virtues in it,—good and evil mingled,—I confess; but nature is so made, and one should know how to accommodate oneself to it.

On my word, said Alceste, in that unison the evil governs to such a point that it chokes the other. Sir, replied the Viscount, if one were as eager to discover good as evil, and had the same delight in spreading the report of it,—if good examples were made public as the bad ones almost always are,—do you not think that the good would weigh down the balance? * But gratitude speaks so low, and indignation so loudly, that you cannot hear but the last. Both friendship and esteem are commonly moderate in their praises; they imitate the modesty of honour, in praise, while resentment and mortification exaggerate everything they describe.

Monsieur, said Alceste to the Viscount, you make me desire to think as you do; and even if the sad truth were on my side, your error would be preferable. Ah, yes, without doubt, replied M. de Laval, ill-humour is good for nothing, the fine part that

* Well said, the Viscount. People think me a grumbler; but I wholly believe this,—nay, *know* this. The world exists, indeed, only by the strength of its silent virtue.

it is, for a man to play, to fall into a fit of spite like a child!—and why? For the mistakes of the circle in which one has lived, as if the whole of nature were in the plot against us, and responsible for the hurt we have received.

You are right, replied Alceste, it would be unjust to consider all men as partners in fault; yet how many complaints may we not justly lodge against them, as a body? Believe me, sir, my judgment of them has serious and grave motives. You will do me justice when you know me. Permit me to see you often! *Often*, said the Viscount, will be difficult. I have much business, and my daughter and I have our studies, which leave us little leisure; but sometimes, if you will, let us profit by our neighbourhood, at our ease, and without formality, for the privilege of the country is to be alone, when we like.

Some days afterwards Monsieur de Laval returned his visit, and Alceste spoke to him of the pleasure that he doubtless felt in making so many people happy. It is a beautiful example, he said, and, to the shame of men, a very rare one. How many persons there are, more powerful and more rich than you, who are nothing but a burden to their inferiors! I neither excuse nor blame them altogether, replied M. de Laval. In order to do good, one must know how to set about it; and do not think that it is so easy to effect our purpose. It is not enough even to be sagacious; it is needful also to be fortunate; it is necessary to

find sensible and docile persons to manage:* and one has constantly need of much address, and patience, to lead the people, naturally suspicious and timid, to what is really for their advantage. Indeed, said Alceste, such excuses are continually made; but have you not conquered all these obstacles? and why should not others conquer them? I, said M. de Laval, have been tempted by opportunity, and seconded by accident.† The people of this province, at the time that I came into possession of my estate, were in a condition of extreme distress. I did but stretch my arms to them; they gave themselves up to me in despair. An arbitrary tax had been lately imposed upon them, which they regarded with so much terror that they preferred sustaining hardships to making any appearance of having wealth; and I found, current through the country, this desolating and destructive maxim, 'The more we work, the more we shall be trodden down.'" (It is precisely so in England to-day, also.) "*The men dared not be laborious; the women trembled to have children.*

I went back to the source of the evil. I addressed myself to the man appointed for the reception of the

* Well said, Viscount, again! So few people know the power of the Third Fors. If I had not chanced to give lessons in drawing to Octavia Hill, I could have done nothing in Marylebone, nor she either, for a while yet, I fancy.

† A lovely, classic, unbetterable sentence of Marmontel's, perfect in wisdom and modesty.

tribute. Monsieur, I said to him, my vassals groan under the weight of the severe measures necessary to make them pay the tax. I wish to hear no more of them; tell me what is wanting yet to make up the payment for the year, and I will acquit the debt myself. Monsieur, replied the receiver, that cannot be. Why not? said I. Because it is not the rule. What! is it not the rule to pay the King the tribute that he demands with the least expense and the least delay possible? Yes, answered he, that would be enough for the King, but it would not be enough for *me*. Where should *I* be if they paid money down? It is by the expense of the compulsory measures that I live; they are the perquisites of my office. To this excellent reason I had nothing to reply, but I went to see the head of the department, and obtained from him the place of receiver-general for my peasants.

My children, I then said to them, (assembling them on my return home,) I have to announce to you that you are in future to deposit in my hands the exact amount of the King's tribute, and no more. There will be no more expenses, no more bailiff's visits. Every Sunday at the bank of the parish, your wives shall bring me their savings, and insensibly you shall find yourselves out of debt. Work now, and cultivate your land; make the most of it you can; no farther tax shall be laid on you. I answer for this to you—I who am your father. For those who are in arrear, I will take some measures for support, or I will advance them the

sum necessary,* and a few days at the dead time of the year, employed in work for me, will reimburse me for my expenses. This plan was agreed upon, and we have followed it ever since. The housewives of the village bring me their little offerings: I encourage them, and speak to them of our good King; and what was an act of distressing servitude, has become an unoppressive act of love.

Finally, as there was a good deal of superfluous time, I established the workshop that you have seen; it turns everything to account, and brings into useful service time which would be lost between the operations of agriculture: the profits of it are applied to public works. A still more precious advantage of this establishment is its having greatly increased the population more children are born, as there is certainty of extended means for their support."

Now note, first, in this passage what material of loyalty and affection there was still in the French heart before the Revolution; and, secondly, how useless it is to be a good King, if the good King allows his officers to live upon the cost of compulsory measures.† And remember that the French Revolution was the revolt of absolute loyalty and love against the senseless cruelty of a "good King."

Next, for a little specimen of the state of our own

* Not for a dividend upon it, I beg you to observe, and even the capital to be repaid in work.

† Or, worse still, as *our* public men do, upon the cost of *non*-compulsory measures!

working population; and the "compulsory—not measures, but measureless license," under which their loyalty and love are placed,—here is a genuine working woman's letter; and if the reader thinks I have given it him in its own spelling that he may laugh at it, the reader is wrong.

May 12, 1873.

"Dear ——

"While Reading the herald to Day on the subject on shortor houers of Labour * I was Reminded of A cercomstance that came under my hone notis when the 10 hours sistom Began in the cotton mills in Lancashire I was Minding a mesheen with 30 treds in it I was then maid to mind 2 of 30 treds each with one shillng Advance of wages wich was 5s for one and 6s for tow with an increes of speed and with improved mecheens in A few years I was minding tow mecheens with tow 100 trads Each and Dubel speed for 9s perweek so that in our improved condation we had to turn out some 100 weght per day and we went as if the Devel was After us for 10 houers per day and with that comparetive small Advance in money and the feemals have ofton Been carred out fainting what with the heat and hard work and those that could not keep up mst go and make room for a nother and all this is Done in Christian England and then we are tould to Be content in the station of Life in wich the Lord as

* These small "powers" of terminal letters in some of the words are very curious.

places us But I say the Lord never Did place us there so we have no Right to Be content o that Right and not might was the Law yours truely C. H. S."

Next to this account of Machine-labour, here is one of Hand-labour, also in a genuine letter,—this second being to myself; (I wish the other had been also, but it was to one of my friends).

"BECKENHAM, KENT,
"*Sept.* 24, 1873.

"That is a pleasant evening in our family when we read and discuss the subjects of 'Fors Clavigera,' and we frequently reperuse them, as for instance, within a few days, your August letter. I was much struck by the notice of the now exploded use of the spinning wheel. My mother, a Cumberland woman, was a spinner, and the whole process, from the fine thread that passed through her notable fingers, and the weaving into linen by an old cottager—a very 'Silas Marner,'—to the bleaching on the orchard grass, was well known to my sister * and myself, when children.

"When I married, part of the linen that I took to my new home was my mother's spinning, and one fine table-cloth was my grandmother's. *What factory, with its thousand spindles, and chemical bleaching powders, can send out such linen as that, which lasted three generations?* †

* A lady high in the ranks of kindly English literature.
† Italics mine, as usual.

"I should not have troubled you with these remarks, had I not at the moment when I read your paragraph on hand-spinning, received a letter from my daughter, now for a time resident in Coburg, (a friend of Octavia Hill's,) which bears immediately on the subject. I have therefore ventured to transcribe it for your perusal, believing that the picture she draws from life, beautiful as it is for its simplicity, may give you a moment's pleasure."

"COBURG, *Sept.* 4, 1873.

"On Thursday I went to call on Frau L.; she was not in; so I went to her mother's, Frau E., knowing that I should find her there. They were all sitting down to afternoon coffee, and asked me to join them, which I gladly did. I had my work-basket with me, and as they were all at work, it was pleasant to do the same thing. Hildigard was there; in fact she lives there, to take care of Frau E. since she had her fall and stiffened her ankle, a year ago. Hildigard took her spinning, and tied on her white apron, filled the little brass basin of the spinning-wheel with water, to wet her fingers, and set the wheel a-purring. I have never seen the process before, and it was very pretty to see her, with her white fingers, and to hear the little low sound. It is quite a pity, I think, ladies do not do it in England,—it is so pretty, and far nicer work than crochet, and so on, when it is finished. *This soft linen made by hand is so superior to any that you get now.*

Presently the four children came in, and the great hunting dog, Feldman; and altogether I thought, as dear little Frau E. sat sewing in her arm-chair, and her old sister near her at her knitting, and Hildigard at her spinning, while pretty Frau L. sewed at her little girl's stuff-skirt,—all in the old-fashioned room full of old furniture, and hung round with miniatures of still older dames and officers, in, to our eyes, strange stiff costumes, that it was a most charming scene, and one I enjoyed as much as going to the theatre,—which I did in the evening."

A most charming scene, my dear lady, I have no doubt; just what Hengler's Circus was, to me, this Christmas. Now for a little more of the charming scenery outside, and far away.

"12, TUNSTALL TERRACE, SUNDERLAND.
"14*th Feb.*, 1874.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The rice famine is down upon us in earnest, and finds our wretched 'administration' unprepared—a ministration unto death!

"It can carry childish gossip 'by return of post' into every village in India, but not food; no, not food even for mothers and babes. So far has our scientific and industrial progress attained.

"To-night comes news that hundreds of deaths from starvation have already occurred, and that even high-caste women are working on the roads; —no food from stores of ours except at the price of

degrading, health-destroying, and perfectly useless toil. God help the nation responsible for this wickedness.

"Dear Mr. Ruskin, you wield the most powerful pen in England, can you not shame us into some sense of duty, some semblance of human feeling? [Certainly not. My good sir, as far as I know, nobody ever minds a word I say, except a few nice girls, who are a great comfort to me, but can't do anything. They don't even know how to spin, poor little lilies!]

"I observe that the *Daily News* of to-day is horrified at the idea that Disraeli should dream of appropriating any part of the surplus revenue to the help of India in this calamity [of course], and even the *Spectator* calls that a 'dangerous' policy. So far is even 'the conscience of the Press' [What next?] corrupted by the dismal science.

"I am, yours truly."

So far the Third Fors has arranged matters for me; but I must put a stitch or two into her work.

Look back to my third letter, for March, 1871 (vol. i. p. 42). You see it is said there that the French war and its issues were none of Napoleon's doing, nor Count Bismarck's; that the mischief in them was St. Louis's doing; and the good, such as it was, the rough father of Frederick the Great's doing.

The father of Frederick the Great was an Evangelical divine of the strictest orthodoxy,—very fond

of beer, bacon, and tobacco, and entirely resolved to have his own way, supposing, as pure Evangelical people always do, that his own way was God's also. It happened, however, for the good of Germany, that this king's own way, to a great extent, *was* God's also,—(we will look at Carlyle's statement of that fact another day,)—and accordingly he maintained, and the ghost of him,—with the help of his son, whom he had liked to have shot as a disobedient and dissipated character,—maintains to this day in Germany, such sacred domestic life as that of which you have an account in the above letter. Which, in peace, is entirely happy, for its own part; and, in war, irresistible.

'Entirely *blessed*,' I had written first, too carelessly; I have had to scratch out the 'blessed' and put in 'happy.' For blessing is only for the meek and merciful, and a German cannot be either; he does not understand even the meaning of the words. In that is the intense, irreconcilable difference between the French and German natures. A Frenchman is selfish only when he is vile and lustful; but a German, selfish in the purest states of virtue and morality. A Frenchman is arrogant only in ignorance; but no quantity of learning ever makes a German modest. "Sir," says Albert Durer of his own work, (and he is the modestest German I know,) "it cannot be better done." Luther serenely damns the entire gospel of St. James, because St. James happens to be not precisely of his own opinions.

Accordingly, when the Germans get command of Lombardy, they bombard Venice, steal her pictures, (which they can't understand a single touch of,) and entirely ruin the country, morally and physically, leaving behind them misery, vice, and intense hatred of themselves, wherever their accursed feet have trodden. They do precisely the same thing by France,—crush her, rob her, leave her in misery of rage and shame; and return home, smacking their lips, and singing Te Deums.

But when the French conquer England, their action upon it is entirely beneficent. Gradually, the country, from a nest of restless savages, becomes strong and glorious; and having good material to work upon, they make of us at last a nation stronger than themselves.

Then the strength of France perishes, virtually, through the folly of St. Louis;—her piety evaporates, her lust gathers infectious power, and the modern Cité rises round the Sainte Chapelle.

It is a woful history. But St. Louis does not perish selfishly; and perhaps is not wholly dead yet,—whatever Garibaldi and his red-jackets may think about him, and their 'Holy Republic.'

Meantime, Germany, through Geneva, works quaintly against France, in our British destiny, and makes an end of many a Sainte Chapelle, in our own sweet river islands. Read Froude's sketch of the Influence of the Reformation on Scottish Character, in his "Short Studies on Great Subjects." And that would be enough for you

to think of, this month; but as this letter is all made up of scraps, it may be as well to finish with this little private note on Luther's people, made last week.

4th March, 1874.—I have been horribly plagued and misguided by evangelical people, all my life; and most of all lately; but my mother was one, and my Scotch aunt; and I have yet so much of the superstition left in me, that I can't help sometimes doing as evangelical people wish,—for all I know it comes to nothing.

One of them, for whom I still have some old liking left, sent me one of their horrible sausage-books the other day, made of chopped-up Bible; but with such a solemn and really pathetic adjuration to read a 'text' every morning, that, merely for old acquaintance' sake, I couldn't refuse. It is all one to me, now, whether I read my Bible, or my Homer, at one leaf or another; only I take the liberty, *pace* my evangelical friend, of looking up the contexts if I happen not to know them.

Now I was very much beaten and overtired yesterday, chiefly owing to a week of black fog, spent in looking over a work of days and people long since dead; and my 'text' this morning was, "Deal courageously, and the Lord do that which seemeth Him good." It sounds a very saintly, submissive, and useful piece of advice; but I was not quite sure who gave it; and it was evidently desirable to ascertain that.

For, indeed, it chances to be given, not by a

saint at all, but by quite one of the most self-willed people on record in any history,—about the last in the world to let the Lord do that which seemed Him good, if he could help it, unless it seemed just as good to himself also,—Joab the son of Zeruiah. The son, to wit, of David's elder sister; who, finding that it seemed good to the Lord to advance the son of David's younger sister to a place of equal power with himself, unhesitatingly smites his thriving young cousin under the fifth rib, while pretending to kiss him, and leaves him wallowing in blood in the midst of the highway. But we have no record of the pious or resigned expressions he made use of on that occasion. We have no record, either, of several other matters one would have liked to know about these people. How it is, for instance, that David has to make a brother of Saul's son;—getting, as it seems, no brotherly kindness—nor, more wonderful yet, sisterly kindness—at his own fireside. It is like a German story of the seventh son—or the seventh bullet—as far as the brothers are concerned; but these sisters, had they also no love for their brave young shepherd brother? Did they receive no countenance from him when he was king? Even for Zeruiah's sake, might he not on his death-bed have at least allowed the Lord to do what seemed Him good with Zeruiah's son, who had so well served him in his battles, (and so quietly in the matter of Bathsheba,) instead of charging the wisdom of Solomon to find some subtle way of

preventing his hoar head from going down to the grave in peace? My evangelical friend will of course desire me not to wish to be wise above that which is written. I am not to ask even who Zeruiah's husband was?—nor whether, in the West-end sense, he was her husband at all?—Well; but if I only want to be wise up to the meaning of what is written? I find, indeed, nothing whatever said of David's elder sister's lover;—but, of his younger sister's lover, I find it written in this evangelical Book-Idol, in one place, that his name was Ithra, an Israelite, and in another that it was Jether, the Ishmaelite. Ithra or Jether, is no matter; Israelite or Ishmaelite, perhaps matters not much; but it matters a great deal that you should know that this is an ill written, and worse trans-written, human history, and not by any means 'Word of God;' and that whatever issues of life, divine or human, there may be in it, for you, can only be got by searching it; and not by chopping it up into small bits and swallowing it like pills. What a trouble there is, for instance, just now, in all manner of people's minds, about Sunday keeping, just because these evangelical people *will* swallow their bits of texts in an entirely indigestible state, without chewing them. Read your Bibles honestly and utterly, my scrupulous friends, and stand by the consequences,—if you have what true men call 'faith.' In the first place, determine clearly, if there is a clear place in your brains to do it, whether you mean to observe the

Sabbath as a Jew, or the day of the Resurrection, as a Christian. Do either thoroughly; you can't do both. If you choose to keep the 'Sabbath,' in defiance of your great prophet, St. Paul, keep the new moons too, and the other fasts and feasts of the Jewish law; but even so, remember that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath also, and that not only it is lawful to do good upon it, but unlawful, in the strength of what you call keeping one day Holy, to do Evil on other six days, and make those unholy; and, finally, that neither new-moon keeping, nor Sabbath keeping, nor fasting, nor praying, will in anywise help an evangelical city like Edinburgh to stand in the judgment higher than Gomorrah, while her week-day arrangements for rent from her lower orders are as follows:—*

"We entered the first room by descending two steps. It seemed to be an old coal-cellar, with an earthen floor, shining in many places from damp, and from a greenish ooze which drained through the wall from a noxious collection of garbage outside, upon which a small window could have looked had it not been filled up with brown paper and rags. There was no grate, but a small fire smouldered on the floor, surrounded by heaps of ashes. The roof was unceiled, the walls were rough and broken, the only light came in from

* Notes on Old Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1869. Things may possibly have mended in some respects in the last five years, but they have assuredly, in the country villages, got tenfold worse.

the open door, which let in unwholesome smells and sounds. No cow or horse could thrive in such a hole. It was abominable. It measured eleven feet by six feet, and the rent was 10*d.* per week, paid in advance. It was nearly dark at noon, even with the door open; but as my eyes became accustomed to the dimness, I saw that the plenishings consisted of an old bed, a barrel with a flagstone on the top of it for a table, a three-legged stool, and an iron pot. A very ragged girl, sorely afflicted with ophthalmia, stood among the ashes doing nothing. She had never been inside a school or church. She did not know how to do anything, but 'did for her father and brother.' On a heap of straw, partly covered with sacking, which was the bed in which father, son, and daughter slept, the brother, ill with rheumatism and sore legs, was lying moaning from under a heap of filthy rags. He had been a baker 'over in the New Town,' but seemed not very likely to recover. It looked as if the sick man had crept into his dark, damp lair, just to die of hopelessness. The father was past work, but 'sometimes got an odd job to do.' The sick man had supported the three. It was hard to be godly, impossible to be cleanly, impossible to be healthy in such circumstances.

"The next room was entered by a low, dark, impeded passage about twelve feet long, too filthy to be traversed without a light. At the extremity of this was a dark winding stair which led up to

four superincumbent storeys of crowded subdivided rooms; and beyond this, to the right, a pitch-dark passage with a 'room' on either side. It was not possible to believe that the most grinding greed could extort money from human beings for the tenancy of such dens as those to which this passage led. They were lairs into which a starving dog might creep to die, but nothing more. Opening a dilapidated door, we found ourselves in a recess nearly six feet high, and nine feet in length by five in breadth. It was not absolutely dark, yet matches aided our investigations even at noonday. There was an earthen floor full of holes, in some of which water had collected. The walls were black and rotten, and alive with woodlice. There was no grate. The rent paid for this evil den, which was only ventilated by the chimney, is 1*s.* per week, or £2, 12*s.* annually! The occupier was a mason's labourer, with a wife and three children. He had come to Edinburgh in search of work, and could not afford a 'higher rent.' The wife said that her husband took the 'wee drap.' So would the President of the Temperance League himself if he were hidden away in such a hole. The contents of this lair on our first visit were a great heap of ashes and other refuse in one corner, some damp musty straw in another, a broken box in the third, with a battered tin pannikin upon it, and nothing else of any kind, saving two small children, nearly nude, covered with running sores, and pitiable from some eye disease. Their hair

was not long, but felted into wisps, and alive with vermin. When we went in they were sitting among the ashes of an extinct fire, and blinked at the light from our matches. Here a neighbour said they sat all day, unless their mother was merciful enough to turn them into the gutter. We were there at eleven the following night, and found the mother, a decent, tidy body, at '*hame*.' There was a small fire then, but no other light. She complained of little besides the darkness of the house, and said, in a tone of dull discontent, she supposed it was 'as good as such as they could expect in Edinburgh.'"

LETTER XLI

BERNARD THE HAPPY

PARIS, 1*st April*, 1874.

I FIND there are still primroses in Kent, and that it is possible still to see blue sky in London in the early morning. It was entirely pure as I drove down past my old Denmark Hill gate, bound for Cannon Street Station, on Monday morning last; gate, closed now on me for evermore, that used to open gladly enough when I came back to it from work in Italy. Now, father and mother and nurse all dead, and the roses of the spring, prime or late —what are they to me?

But I want to know, rather, what are they to *you?* What have *you*, workers in England, to do with April, or May, or June either; your mill-wheels go no faster for the sunshine, do they? and you can't get more smoke up the chimneys because more sap goes up the trunks. Do you so much as know or care who May was, or her son, Shepherd of the heathen souls, so despised of you Christians? Nevertheless, I have a word or two to say to you in the light of the hawthorn blossom, only you must read some rougher ones first. I have printed the June Fors together with this, because I want you

to read the June one first, only the substance of it is not good for the May-time; but read it, and when you get to near the end, where it speaks of the distinctions between the sins of the hot heart and the cold, come back to this, for I want you to think in the flush of May what strength is in the flush of the heart also. You will find that in all my late books (during the last ten years) I have summed the needful virtue of men under the terms of gentleness and justice; gentleness being the virtue which distinguishes gentlemen from churls, and justice that which distinguishes honest men from rogues. Now gentleness may be defined as the Habit or State of Love; the Red Carita of Giotto (see account of her in Letter Seventh); and ungentleness or clownishness, the opposite State or Habit of Lust.

Now there are three great loves that rule the souls of men: the love of what is lovely in creatures, and of what is lovely in things, and what is lovely in report. And these three loves have each their relative corruption, a lust—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

And, as I have just said, a gentleman is distinguished from a churl by the purity of sentiment he can reach in all these three passions: by his imaginative love, as opposed to lust; his imaginative possession of wealth as opposed to avarice; his imaginative desire of honour as opposed to pride.

And it is quite possible for the simplest workman or labourer for whom I write to understand what

the feelings of a gentleman are, and share them, if he will; but the crisis and horror of this present time are that its desire of money, and the fulness of luxury dishonestly attainable by common persons, are gradually making churls of all men; and the nobler passions are not merely disbelieved, but even the conception of them seems ludicrous to the impotent churl mind; so that, to take only so poor an instance of them as my own life—because I have passed it in almsgiving, not in fortune-hunting; because I have laboured always for the honour of others, not my own, and have chosen rather to make men look to Turner and Luini, than to form or exhibit the skill of my own hand; because I have lowered my rents, and assured the comfortable lives of my poor tenants, instead of taking from them all I could force for the roofs they needed; because I love a wood walk better than a London street, and would rather watch a seagull fly than shoot it, and rather hear a thrush sing than eat it; finally, because I never disobeyed my mother, because I have honoured all women with solemn worship, and have been kind even to the unthankful and the evil; therefore the hacks of English art and literature wag their heads at me, and the poor wretch who pawns the dirty linen of his soul daily for a bottle of sour wine and a cigar, talks of the "effeminate sentimentality of Ruskin."

Now of these despised sentiments, which in all ages have distinguished the gentleman from the

churl, the first is that reverence for womanhood which, even through all the cruelties of the Middle Ages, developed itself with increasing power until the thirteenth century, and became consummated in the imagination of the Madonna, which ruled over all the highest arts and purest thoughts of that age.

To the common Protestant mind the dignities ascribed to the Madonna have been always a violent offence; they are one of the parts of the Catholic faith which are openest to reasonable dispute, and least comprehensible by the average realistic and materialist temper of the Reformation. But after the most careful examination, neither as adversary nor as friend, of the influences of Catholicism for good and evil, I am persuaded that the worship of the Madonna has been one of its noblest and most vital graces, and has never been otherwise than productive of true holiness of life and purity of character. I do not enter into any question as to the truth or fallacy of the idea; I no more wish to defend the historical or theological position of the Madonna than that of St. Michael or St. Christopher; but I am certain that to the habit of reverent belief in, and contemplation of, the character ascribed to the heavenly hierarchies, we must ascribe the highest results yet achieved in human nature, and that it is neither Madonna-worship nor saint-worship, but the evangelical self-worship and hell-worship—gloating, with an imagination as unfounded as it

is foul, over the torments of the damned, instead of the glories of the blest,—which have in reality degraded the languid powers of Christianity to their present state of shame and reproach. There has probably not been an innocent cottage home throughout the length and breadth of Europe during the whole period of vital Christianity, in which the imagined presence of the Madonna has not given sanctity to the humblest duties, and comfort to the sorest trials of the lives of women; and every brightest and loftiest achievement of the arts and strength of manhood has been the fulfilment of the assured prophecy of the poor Israelite maiden, "He that is mighty hath magnified me, and Holy is His name." What we are about to substitute for such magnifying in our modern wisdom, let the reader judge from two slight things that chanced to be noticed by me in my walk round Paris. I generally go first to Our Lady's Church, for though the towers and most part of the walls are now merely the modern model of the original building, much of the portal sculpture is still genuine, and especially the greater part of the lower arcades of the north-west door, where the common entrance is. I always held these such valuable pieces of the thirteenth century work that I had them cast, in mass, some years ago, brought away casts, eight feet high by twelve wide, and gave them to the Architectural Museum. So as I was examining these, and laboriously gleaning what was left of the old work among M. Viollet

le Duc's fine fresh heads of animals and points of leaves, I saw a brass plate in the back of one of the niches, where the improperly magnified saints used to be. At first I thought it was over one of the usual almsboxes which have a right to be at church entrances (if anywhere); but catching sight of an English word or two on it, I stopped to read, and read to the following effect:—

"F. du Larin,
office
of the
Victoria Pleasure Trips
And Excursions to Versailles.
Excursions to the Battle-fields round Paris.

"A four-horse coach with an English guide starts daily from Notre Dame Cathedral, at 10½ a.m. for Versailles, by the Bois de Boulogne, St. Cloud, Montretout, and Ville d'Avray. Back in Paris at 5½ p.m. Fares must be secured one day in advance at the entrance of Notre Dame.

The Manager, H. du Larin."

"Magnificat anima mea Dominum, quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ Suæ." Truly it seems to be time that God should again regard the lowliness of His handmaiden, now that she has become keeper of the coach office for excursions to Versailles. The arrangement becomes still more perfect in the objects of this Christian joyful pilgrimage (*from* Canterbury,

as it were, instead of to it), the "Battle-fields round Paris!"

From Notre Dame I walked back into the livelier parts of the city, though in no very lively mood; but recovered some tranquillity in the Marché aux fleurs, which is a pleasant spectacle in April, and then made some circuit of the Boulevards, where, as the Third Fors would have it, I suddenly came in view of one of the temples of the modern superstition, which is to replace Mariolatry. For it seems that human creatures *must* imagine something or someone in Apotheosis, and the Assumption of the Virgin, and Titian's or Tintoret's views on that matter being held reasonable no more, apotheosis of some other power follows as a matter of course. Here accordingly is one of the modern hymns on the Advent of Spring, which replace now in France the sweet Cathedral services of the Mois de Marie. It was printed in vast letters on a white sheet, dependent at the side of the porch or main entrance to the fur shop of the "Compagnie Anglo-Russe."

"Le printemps s'annonce avec son gracieux cortège de rayons et de fleurs. Adieu, l'hiver! C'en est bien fini! Et cependant il faut que toutes ces fourrures soient enlevées, vendues, données, dans ces 6 jours. C'est une aubaine inesperée, un placement fabuleux; car, qu'on ne l'oublie pas, la fourrure vraie, la belle, la riche, a toujours sa valeur intrinsique. Et, comme couronnement de cette sorte d'APOTHÉOSE la Cie. Anglo-Russe remet gratis

à tout acheteur un talisman merveilleux pour conserver la fourrure pendant 10 saisons."

"Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them."

The Anglo-Russian company having now superseded Divine labours in such matters, you have also, instead of the grand old Dragon-Devil with his "Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil," only a little weasel of a devil with an ermine tip to his tail, advising you, "Ye shall be as Gods, buying your skins cheap."

I am a simpleton, am I, to quote such an exploded book as Genesis? My good wiseacre readers, I know as many flaws in the book of Genesis as the best of you, but I knew the book before I knew its flaws, while you know the flaws, and never have known the book, nor can know it. And it is at present much the worse for you; for indeed the stories of this book of Genesis have been the nursery tales of men mightiest whom the world has yet seen in art, and policy, and virtue, and none of you will write better stories for your children, yet awhile. And your little Cains will learn quickly enough to ask if they are their brother's keepers, and your little Fathers of Canaan merrily enough to show their own father's nakedness without dread either of banishment or malediction; but many a day will pass, and their evil generations vanish with it, in that sudden nothingness of the wicked, "He passed away, and lo, he was not," before one will again

rise, of whose death there may remain the Divine tradition, "He walked with God, and was not, for God took him." Apotheosis! How the dim hope of it haunts even the last degradation of men; and through the six thousand years from Enoch, and the vague Greek ages which dreamed of their twin-hero stars, declines, in this final stage of civilization, into dependence on the sweet promise of the Anglo-Russian tempter, with his ermine tail, "Ye shall be as Gods, and buy cat-skin cheap."

So it must be. I know it, my good wiseacres. You can have no more Queens of Heaven, nor assumptions of triumphing saints. Even your simple country Queen of May, whom once you worshipped for a goddess — has not little Mr. Faraday analysed her, and proved her to consist of charcoal and water, combined under what the Duke of Argyll calls the "reign of law"? Your once fortune-guiding stars, which used to twinkle in a mysterious manner, and to make you wonder what they were,—everybody knows what they are now: only hydrogen gas, and they stink as they twinkle. My wiseacre acquaintances, it is very fine, doubtless, for you to know all these things, who have plenty of money in your pockets, and nothing particular to burden your chemical minds; but for the poor, who have nothing in their pockets, and the wretched, who have much on their hearts, what in the world is the good of knowing that the only heaven they have to go to is a large gasometer?

"Poor and wretched!" you answer. "But when once everybody is convinced that heaven is a large gasometer, and when we have turned all the world into a small gasometer, and can drive round it by steam, and in forty minutes be back again where we were,—nobody will be poor or wretched any more. Sixty pounds on the square inch, — can anybody be wretched under that general application of high pressure?"

(Assisi, 15th April.)

Good wiseacres, yes; it seems to me, at least, more than probable: but if not, and you all find yourselves rich and merry, with steam legs and steel hearts, I am well assured there will be found yet room, where your telescopes have not reached, nor can,—grind you their lenses ever so finely,—room for the quiet souls, who choose for their part, poverty, with light and peace.

I am writing at a narrow window, which looks out on some broken tiles and a dead wall. A wall dead in the profoundest sense, you wiseacres would think it. Six hundred years old, and as strong as when it was built, and paying nobody any interest, and still less commission, on the cost of repair. Both sides of the street, or pathway rather,—it is not nine feet wide,—are similarly built with solid blocks of grey marble, arched rudely above the windows, with here and there a cross on the key-stones.

If I chose to rise from my work and walk a

hundred yards down this street (if one may so call the narrow path between grey walls, as quiet and lonely as a sheepwalk on Shap Fells,) I should come to a small prison-like door; and over the door is a tablet of white marble let into the grey, and on the tablet is written, in contracted Latin, what in English signifies :—

"Here, Bernard the Happy*
Received St. Francis of Assisi,
And saw him, in ecstasy."

Good wiseacres, you believe nothing of the sort, do you? Nobody ever yet was in ecstasy, you think, till now, when they may buy cat-skin cheap?

Do you believe in Blackfriars Bridge, then; and admit that some day or other there must have been reason to call it "Black Friar's"? As surely as the bridge stands over Thames, and St. Paul's above it, these two men, Paul and Francis, had their ecstasies, in bygone days, concerning other matters than ermine tails; and still the same ecstasies, or effeminate sentiments, are possible to human creatures, believe it or not as you will. I am not now, whatever the *Pall Mall Gazette* may think, an ecstatic person myself. But thirty

* "Bernard the happy." The Beato of Mont Oliveto; not Bernard of Clairvaux. The entire inscription is, "received St. Francis of Assisi to supper and bed"; but if I had written it so, it would have appeared that St. Francis's ecstasy was in consequence of his getting his supper.

years ago I knew once or twice what joy meant, and have not forgotten the feeling; nay, even so little a while as two years ago, I had it back again —for a day. And I can assure you, good wiseacres, there is such a thing to be had; but not in cheap shops, nor, I was going to say, for money; yet in a certain sense it is buyable—by forsaking all that a man hath. Buyable—literally enough—the freehold Elysian field at that price, but not a doit cheaper; and I believe, at this moment, the reason my voice has an uncertain sound, the reason that this design of mine stays unhelped, and that only a little group of men and women, moved chiefly by personal regard, stand with me in a course so plain and true, is that I have not yet given myself to it wholly, but have halted between good and evil, and sit still at the receipt of custom, and am always looking back from the plough.

It is not wholly my fault this. There seem to me good reasons why I should go on with my work in Oxford; good reasons why I should have a house of my own with pictures and library; good reasons why I should still take interest from the bank; good reasons why I should make myself as comfortable as I can, wherever I go; travel with two servants, and have a dish of game at dinner. It is true, indeed, that I have given the half of my goods and more to the poor; it is true also that the work in Oxford is not a matter of pride, but of duty with me; it is true that I think it wiser

to live what seems to other people a rational and pleasant, not an enthusiastic life; and that I serve my servants at least as much as they serve me. But, all this being so, I find there is yet something wrong; I have no peace, still less ecstasy. It seems to me as if one had indeed to wear camel's-hair instead of dress coats before one can get that; and I was looking at St. Francis's camel's-hair coat yesterday (they have it still in the sacristy), and I don't like the look of it at all; the Anglo-Russian Company's wear is ever so much nicer,—let the devil at least have this due.

And he must have a little more due even than this. It is not at all clear to me how far the Beggar and Pauper Saint, whose marriage with the Lady Poverty I have come here to paint from Giotto's dream of it,—how far, I say, the mighty work he did in the world was owing to his vow of poverty, or diminished by it. If he had been content to preach love alone, whether among poor or rich, and if he had understood that love, for all God's creatures, was one and the same blessing; and that, if he was right to take the doves out of the fowler's hand, that they might build their nests, he was himself wrong when he went out in the winter's night on the hills, and made for himself dolls of snow, and said, "Francis, these—behold—these are thy wife and thy children." If instead of quitting his father's trade, that he might nurse lepers, he had made his father's trade holy and pure, and honourable more than beggary, perhaps at this day

the Black Friars might yet have had an unruined house by Thames shore, and the children of his native village not be standing in the porches of the temple built over his tomb, to ask alms of the infidel.

LETTER XLII

MISERICORDIA

I MUST construct my letters still, for a while, of swept-up fragments; every day provokes me to write new matter; but I must not lose the fruit of the old days. Here is some worth picking up, though ill-ripened for want of sunshine, (the little we had spending itself on the rain,) last year.

1st August, 1873.

"Not being able to work steadily this morning, because there was a rainbow half a mile broad, and violet-bright, on the shoulders of the Old Man of Coniston—(by calling it half a mile broad, I mean that half a mile's breadth of mountain was coloured by it,—and by calling it violet-bright, I mean that the violet zone of it came pure against the grey rocks; and note, by the way, that essentially all the colours of the rainbow are secondary;—yellow exists only as a line—red as a line—blue as a line; but the zone itself is of varied orange, green, and violet,)—not being able, I say, for steady work, I opened an old diary of 1849, and as the Third Fors would have it, at this extract from the Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

(Venice.)

"The Prince of Saxony went to see the Arsenal three days ago, waited on by a numerous nobility of both sexes; the Bucentaur was adorned and launched, a magnificent collation given; and we sailed a little in it. I was in company with the Signora Justiniani Gradenigo and Signora Marina Crizzo. There were two cannons founded in his (the Prince of Saxony's) presence, and a galley built and launched in an hour's time." (Well may Dante speak of that busy Arsenal!)

"Last night there was a concert of voices and instruments at the Hospital of the Incurabili, where there were two girls that in the opinion of all people excel either Faustina or Cuzzoni.

"I am invited to-morrow to the Foscarini to dinner, which is to be followed by a concert and a ball."

The account of a regatta follows, in which the various nobles had boats costing £1000 sterling each, none less than £500, and enough of them to look like a little fleet. The Signora Pisani Mocenigo's represented the Chariot of the Night, drawn by four sea-horses, and showing the rising of the moon, accompanied with stars, the statues on each side representing the Hours, to the number of twenty-four.

Pleasant times, these, for Venice! one's Bucentaur launched, wherein to eat, buoyantly, a magnificent collation—beautiful ladies driving their ocean steeds in the Chariot of the Night—beautiful songs, at the

Hospital of the Incurabili. Much bettered, these, from the rough days when one had to row and fight for life, thought Venice; better days still, in the nineteenth century, being—as she appears to believe now—in store for her.

You thought, I suppose, that in writing those numbers of Fors last year from Venice and Verona, I was idling, or digressing?

Nothing of the kind. The business of Fors is to tell you of Venice and Verona; and many things of them.

You don't care about Venice and Verona? Of course not. Who does? And I beg you to observe that the day is coming when, exactly in the same sense, active working men will say to any antiquarian who purposes to tell them something of England, "We don't care about England." And the antiquarian will answer, just as I have answered you now, "Of course not. Who does?"

Nay, the saying has been already said to me, and by a wise and good man. When I asked, at the end of my inaugural lecture at Oxford, "Will you, youths of England, make your country again a royal throne of kings, a sceptred isle, for all the world a source of light—a centre of peace?"—my University friends came to me, with grave faces, to remonstrate against irrelevant and Utopian topics of that nature being introduced in lectures on art; and a very dear American friend wrote to me, when I sent the lecture to him, in some such terms as these: "Why will you diminish your real influence

for good, by speaking as if England could now take any dominant place in the world? How many millions, think you, are there here, of the activest spirits of their time, who care nothing for England, and would read no farther, after coming upon such a passage?"

That England deserves little care from any man nowadays, is fatally true; that in a century more she will be—where Venice is—among the dead of nations, is far more than probable. And yet—that you do not care for dead Venice, is the sign of your own ruin; and that the Americans do not care for dying England, is only the sign of their inferiority to her.

For this dead Venice once taught us to be merchants, sailors, and gentlemen; and this dying England taught the Americans all they have of speech, or thought, hitherto. What thoughts they have not learned from England are foolish thoughts; what words they have not learned from England, unseemly words; the vile among them not being able even to be humorous parrots, but only obscene mocking birds. An American republican woman, lately, describes a child which "like cherubim and seraphim continually did cry;"* such their feminine learning of the European fashions of 'Te Deum'! And, as I tell you, Venice in like manner taught us, when she and we were honest, our marketing, and our manners. Then she began

* *Pall Mall Gazette*, July 31st, 1873.

trading in pleasure, and souls of men, before us; followed that Babylonish trade to her death,—we nothing loth to imitate, so plausible she was, in her mythic gondola, and Chariot of the Night! But where her pilotage has for the present carried her, and is like to carry *us*, it may be well to consider. And therefore I will ask you to glance back to my twentieth letter, giving account of the steam music, the modern Tasso's echoes, practised on her principal lagoon. That is her present manner, you observe, of "whistling *at her darg*." But for festivity *after* work, or altogether superseding work—launching one's adorned Bucentaur for collation—let us hear what she is doing in that kind.

From the Rinnovamento (Renewal, or Revival,) "Gazette of the people of Venice" of 2nd July, 1872, I translate a portion of one of their daily corespondent's letters, describing his pleasures of the previous day.

"I embarked on a little steamboat. It was elegant—it was vast. But its contents were enormously greater than its capacity. The little steamboat overflowed* with men, women, and boys. The Commandant, a proud young man, cried, 'Come in, come in!' and the crowd became always more close, and one could scarcely breathe" (the heroic exhortations of the proud youth leading his public to this painful result). "All at once a delicate

* "Rigurgitava"—gushed or gorged up; as a bottle which you have filled too full and too fast.

person * of the piazza, feeling herself unwell, cried 'I suffocate.' The Commandant perceived that suffocation did veritably prevail, and gave the word of command, 'Enough.'

"In eighteen minutes I had the good fortune to land safe at the establishment, 'The Favourite.' And here my eyes opened for wonder. In truth, only a respectable force of will could have succeeded in transforming this place, only a few months ago still desert and uncultivated, into a site of delights. Long alleys, grassy carpets, small mountains, charming little banks, châlets, solitary and mysterious paths, and then an interminable covered way which conducts to the bathing establishment; and in that, attendants dressed in mariners' dresses, a most commodious basin, the finest linen, and the most regular and solicitous service.

"Surprised, and satisfied, I plunged myself cheerfully into the sea. After the bath, is prescribed a walk. Obedient to the dictates of hygiene, I take my returning way along the pleasant shore of the sea to 'The Favourite.' A châlet, or rather an immense salon, is become a concert room. And, in fact, an excellent orchestra is executing therein most chosen pieces. The artists are all endued in

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* Sensale, an interesting Venetian word. The fair on the Feast of the Ascension at Venice became in mellifluous brevity, 'Sensa,' and the most ornamental of the ware purchaseable at it, therefore, Sensale.

A "Holy-Thursday-Fairing," feeling herself unwell, would be the properest translation.

dress coats, and wear white cravats. I hear with delight a pot-pourri from Faust. I then take a turn through the most vast park, and visit the Restaurant.

"To conclude. The Lido has no more need to become a place of delights. It is, in truth, already become so.

"All honour to the brave who have effected the marvellous transformation."

Onore ai bravi!—Honour to the brave! Yes; in all times, among all nations, that is entirely desirable. You know I told you, in last Fors, that to honour the brave dead was to be our second child's lesson. None the less expedient if the brave we have to honour be alive, instead of long dead. Here are our modern Venetian troubadours, in white cravats, celebrating the victories of their Hardicanutes with collection of choicest melody—pot-pourri—hotch-potch, from Faust. And, indeed, is not this a notable conquest which resuscitated Venice has made of her Lido? Where all was vague sea-shore, now, behold, "little mountains, mysterious paths." Those unmanufactured mountains—Euganeans and Alps—seen against the sunset, are not enough for the vast mind of Venice born again; nor the canals between her palaces mysterious enough paths. Here are mountains to our perfect mind, and more solemn ways,—a new kingdom for us, conquered by the brave. Conquest, you observe also, just of the kind which in our *Times* newspaper is honoured always in like

manner, 'Private Enterprise.' The only question is, whether the privacy of your enterprise is always as fearless of exposure as it used to be,—or even, the enterprise of it as enterprising. Let me tell you a little of the private enterprise of dead Venice, that you may compare it with that of the living.

You doubted me just now, probably, when I told you that Venice taught you to be sailors. You thought your Drakes and Grenvilles needed no such masters. No! but a hundred years before Sir Francis's time, the blind captain of a Venetian galley,—of one of those things which the Lady Mary saw built in an hour,—won the empire of the East. You did fine things in the Baltic, and before Sebastopol, with your ironclads and your Woolwich infants, did you? Here was a piece of fighting done from the deck of a rowed boat, which came to more good, it seems to me.

"The Duke of Venice had disposed his fleet in one line along the sea-wall (of Constantinople), and had cleared the battlements with his shot (of stones and arrows); but still the galleys dared not take ground. But the Duke of Venice, though he was old (ninety) and stone-blind, stood, all armed, at the head of his galley, and had the gonfalon of St. Mark before him; and he called to his people to ground his ship, or they should die for it. So they ran the ship aground, and leaped out, and carried St. Mark's gonfalon to the shore before the Duke. Then the Venetians, seeing their Duke's galley ashore, followed him; and they

planted the flag of St. Mark on the walls, and took twenty-five towers."

The good issue of which piece of pantaloon's play was that the city itself, a little while after, with due help from the French, was taken, and that the crusading army proceeded thereon to elect a new Emperor of the Eastern Empire.

Which office six French Barons, and six Venetian, being appointed to bestow, and one of the French naming first the Duke of Venice, he had certainly been declared Emperor, but one of the Venetians themselves, Pantaleone Barbo, declaring that no man could be Duke of Venice, and Emperor too, gave his word for Baldwin of Flanders, to whom accordingly the throne was given; while to the Venetian State was offered, with the consent of all, if they chose to hold it—about a third of the whole Roman Empire!

Venice thereupon deliberates with herself. Her own present national territory—the true 'State' of Venice—is a marsh, which you can see from end to end of;—some wooden houses, half afloat, and others wholly afloat, in the canals of it; and a total population, in round numbers, about as large as that of our parish of Lambeth. Venice feels some doubt whether, out of this wild duck's nest, and with that number of men, she can at once safely, and in all the world's sight, undertake to govern Lacedæmon, Ægina, Ægos Potamos, Crete, and half the Greek islands; nevertheless, she thinks she will try a little 'private enterprise' upon them. So

in 1207 the Venetian Senate published an edict by which there was granted to all Venetian citizens permission to arm, at their own expense, war-galleys, and to subdue, if they could manage it in that private manner, such islands and Greek towns of the Archipelago as might seem to them what we call "eligible residences," the Senate graciously giving them leave to keep whatever they could get. Whereupon certain Venetian merchants—proud young men—stood, as we see them standing now on their decks on the Riva, crying to the crowd, 'Montate! Montate!' and without any help from steam, or encumbrance from the markets of Ascension Day, rowed and sailed—somewhat *outside* the Lido. Mark Dandolo took Gallipoli; Mark Sanudo, Naxos, Paros, and Melos;—(you have heard of marbles and Venuses coming from those places, have not you?)—Marin Dandolo, Andros; Andrea Ghisi, Micone and Scyros; Dominico Michieli, Ceos; and Philocola Navigieri, the island of Vulcan himself, Lemnos. Took them, and kept them also! (not a little to our present sorrow; for, being good Christians, these Venetian gentlemen made wild work among the Parian and Melian gods). It was not till 1570 that the twenty-first Venetian Duke of Melos was driven out by the Turks, and the career of modern white-cravated Venice virtually begun.

"Honour to the brave!" Yes, in God's name, and by all manner of means! And dishonour to the cowards: but, my good Italian and good English

acquaintances, are you so sure, then, you know which is which? Nay, are you honestly willing to acknowledge there is any difference? Heaven be praised if you are!—but I thought your modern gospel was, that all were alike? Here's the *Punch* of last week lying beside me, for instance, with its normal piece of pathos upon the advertisements of death. Dual deaths this time; and pathetic epitaphs on the Bishop of Winchester and the Baron Bethell. The best it can honestly say, (and *Punch*, as far as I know papers, is an honest one,) is that the Bishop was a pleasant kind of person; and the best it can say for the Chancellor is, that he was witty;—but, fearing that something more might be expected, it smooths all down with a sop of popular varnish, "How good the worst of us!—how bad the best!" Alas, Mr. Punch, is it come to this? and is there to be no more knocking down, then? and is your last scene in future to be—shaking hands with the devil?—clerical pantaloon in white cravat asking a blessing on the reconciliation, and the drum and pipe finishing with a pot-pourri from Faust?

A popular tune, truly, everywhere, nowadays—"Devil's hotch-potch," and listened to "avec delices!" And, doubtless, pious Republicans on their death-beds will have a care to bequeath it, rightly played, to their children, before they go to hear it, divinely executed, in their own blessed country.

"How good the worst of us!—how bad the best!"

Jeanie Deans, and St. Agnes, and the Holy Thursday fairing, all the same!

My good working readers, I will try to-day to put you more clearly in understanding of this modern gospel,—of what truth there is in it—for some there is,—and of what pestilent evil.

I call it a modern gospel: in its deepest truth it is as old as Christianity. "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." And it was the most distinctive character of Christianity. Here was a new, astonishing religion indeed; one had heard before of righteousness; before of resurrection;—never before of mercy to sin, or fellowship with it.

But it is only in strictly modern times (that is to say, within the last hundred years) that this has been fixed on, by a large sect of thick-headed persons, as the *essence* of Christianity,—nay, as so much its essence, that to be an extremely sinful sinner is deliberately announced by them as the best of qualifications for becoming an extremely Christian Christian.

But all the teachings of Heaven are given—by sad law—in so obscure, nay, often in so ironical manner that a blockhead necessarily reads them wrong. Very marvellous it is that Heaven, which really in one sense *is* merciful to sinners, is in no sense merciful to fools, but even lays pitfalls for them, and inevitable snares.

Again and again, in the New Testament, the

publican (supposed at once traitor to his country and thief) and the harlot are made the companions of Christ. She out of whom He had cast seven devils, loves Him best, sees Him first, after His resurrection. The sting of that *old* verse, "When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst to him, and hast been partaker with adulterers," seems done away with. Adultery itself uncondemned, — for, behold, in your hearts is not every one of you alike? "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And so, and so, no more stones shall be cast nowadays; and here, on the top of our epitaph on the Bishop, lies a notice of the questionable sentence which hanged a man for beating his wife to death with a stick. "The jury recommended him strongly to mercy."

They did so, because they knew not, in their own hearts, what mercy meant. They were afraid to do anything so extremely compromising and disagreeable as causing a man to be hanged,—had no 'pity' for any creatures beaten to death—wives, or beasts; but only a cowardly fear of commanding death, where it was due. Your modern conscience will not incur the responsibility of shortening the hourly more guilty life of a single rogue; but will contentedly fire a salvo of mitrailleuses into a regiment of honest men—leaving Providence to guide the shot. But let us fasten on the word they abused, and understand it. Mercy—misericordia: it does not in the least mean forgiveness of sins,—it means pity of sorrows. In that very instance which the

Evangelicals are so fond of quoting—the adultery of David—it is not the Passion for which he is to be judged, but the *want* of Passion,—the want of Pity. *This* he is to judge himself for, by his own mouth:—"As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die,—because he hath done this thing, and because he had *no pity*."

And you will find, alike throughout the record of the Law and the promises of the Gospel, that there is, indeed, forgiveness with God, and Christ, for the passing sins of the hot heart, but none for the eternal and inherent sin of the cold. 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy';—find it you written anywhere that the *un*merciful shall? 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.' But have you record of any one's sins being forgiven who loved not at all?

I opened my oldest Bible just now, to look for the accurate words of David about the killed lamb;—a small, closely, and very neatly printed volume it is, printed in Edinburgh by Sir D. Hunter Blair and J. Bruce, Printers to the King's Most Excellent Majesty in 1816. Yellow, now, with age, and flexible, but not unclean, with much use, except that the lower corners of the pages at 8th of 1st Kings, and 32nd Deuteronomy are worn somewhat thin and dark, the learning of these two chapters having cost me much pains. My mother's list of the chapters with which, learned every syllable accurately, she established my soul in life, has just

fallen out of it. And as probably the sagacious reader has already perceived that these letters are written in their irregular way, among other reasons, that they may contain, as the relation may become apposite, so much of autobiography as it seems to me desirable to write, I will take what indulgence the sagacious reader will give me, for printing the list thus accidentally occurrent :—

Exodus,	chapters	15th and 20th.
2 Samuel	,,	1st, from 17th verse to the end.
1 Kings	,,	8th.
Psalms		23rd, 32nd, 90th, 91st, 103rd, 112th, 119th, 139th.
Proverbs	,,	2nd, 3rd, 8th, 12th.
Isaiah	,,	58th.
Matthew	,,	5th, 6th, 7th.
Acts	,,	26th.
1 Corinthians	,,	13th, 15th.
James	,,	4th.
Revelation	,,	5th, 6th.

And truly, though I have picked up the elements of a little further knowledge,—in mathematics, meteorology, and the like, in after life,—and owe not a little to the teaching of many people, this maternal installation of my mind in that property of chapters, I count very confidently the most precious, and, on the whole, the one essential part of all my education.

For the chapters became, indeed, strictly conclusive and protective to me in all modes of thought;

and the body of divinity they contain, acceptable through all fear or doubt: nor, through any fear or doubt or fault have I ever lost my loyalty to them, nor betrayed the first command in the one I was made to repeat oftenest, "Let not Mercy and Truth forsake Thee."

And at my present age of fifty-five, in spite of some enlarged observations of what modern philosophers call the Reign of Law, I perceive more distinctly than ever the Reign of a Spirit of Mercy and Truth,—infinite in pardon and purification for its wandering and faultful children, who have yet Love in their hearts; and altogether adverse and implacable to its perverse and lying enemies, who have resolute hatred in their hearts, and resolute falsehood on their lips.

This assertion of the existence of a Spirit of Mercy and Truth, as the master first of the Law of Life, and then of the methods of knowledge and labour by which it is sustained, and which the *Saturday Review* calls the effeminate sentimentality of Mr. Ruskin's political economy, is accurately, you will observe, reversed by the assertion of the Predatory and Carnivorous—or, in plainer English, flesh-eating spirit in Man himself, as the regulator of modern civilization, in the paper read by the Secretary at the Social Science meeting in Glasgow, 1860. Out of which the following fundamental passage may stand for sufficient and permanent example of the existent, practical, and unsentimental English mind, being the most vile sentence

which I have ever seen in the literature of any country or time :—

"As no one will deny that Man possesses carnivorous teeth, or that all animals that possess them are more or less predatory, it is unnecessary to argue, à priori, that a predatory instinct naturally follows from such organization. It is our intention here to show how this inevitable result operates on civilized existence by its being one of the conditions of Man's nature, and, consequently, of all arrangements of civilized society."

The paper proceeds, and is entirely constructed, on the assumption that the predatory spirit is not only one of the conditions of man's nature, but the particular condition on which the arrangements of Society are to be founded. For "Reason would immediately suggest to one of superior strength, that however desirable it might be to take possession by violence, of what another had laboured to produce, he might be treated in the same way by one stronger than himself, to which he, of course, would have great objection. In order, therefore, to prevent or put a stop to a practice which each would object to in his own case," etc., etc. And so the Social Science interpreter proceeds to sing the present non-sentimental Proverbs and Psalms of England,—with trumpets also and shawms—and steam whistles. And there is concert of voices and instruments at the Hospital of the Incurabili, and Progress—indubitably—in Chariots of the Night.

LETTER XLIII

THE CHÂTEAU ROUGE:—FRENCH FREEDOM

ROME, *Corpus-Domini*, 1874.

I WROTE, for a preface to the index at the end of the second year of Fors, part of an abstract of what had been then stated in the course of this work. Fate would not let me finish it; but what was done will be useful now, and shall begin my letter for this month. Completing three and a half years of Fors, it may contain a more definite statement of its purpose than any given hitherto; though I have no intention of explaining that purpose entirely, until it is in sufficient degree accomplished. I have a house to build; but none shall mock me by saying I was not able to finish it, nor be vexed by not finding in it the rooms they expected. But the current and continual purpose of Fors Clavigera is to explain the powers of Chance, or Fortune (Fors), as she offers to men the conditions of prosperity; and as these conditions are accepted or refused, nails down and fastens their fate for ever, being thus 'Clavigera,'—'nail-bearing.' The image is one familiar in mythology: my own conception of it was first got from Horace, and developed by steady effort to read history with

impartiality, and to observe the lives of men around me with charity. "How you may make your fortune, or mar it," is the expansion of the title.

Certain authoritative conditions of life, of its happiness, and its honour, are therefore stated, in this book, as far as they may be, conclusively and indisputably, at present known. I do not enter into any debates, nor advance any opinions. With what is debateable I am unconcerned; and when I only have opinions about things, I do not talk about them. I attack only what cannot on any possible ground be defended; and state only what I know to be incontrovertibly true.

You will find, as you read Fors more, that it differs curiously from most modern books in this. Modern fashion is, that the moment a man strikes some little lucifer match, or is hit by any form of fancy, he begins advertising his lucifer match, and fighting for his fancy, totally ignoring the existing sunshine, and the existing substances of things. But I have no matches to sell, no fancies to fight for. All that I have to say is that the day is in heaven, and rock and wood on earth, and that you must see by the one, and work with the other. You have heard as much before, perhaps. I hope you have; I should be ashamed if there were anything in Fors which had not been said before,—and that a thousand times, and a thousand times of times,—there is nothing in it, nor ever will be in it, but common truths, as clear to honest mankind as their daily sunrise, as necessary as their

daily bread; and which the fools who deny can only live, themselves, because other men know and obey.

You will therefore find that whatever is set down in Fors for you is assuredly true,—inevitable,—trustworthy to the uttermost,—however strange.* Not because I have any power of knowing more than other people, but simply because I have taken the trouble to ascertain what they also may ascertain if they choose. Compare on this point, Letter VI. (vol. i. p. 106).

The following rough abstract of the contents of the first seven letters may assist the reader in their use.

LETTER I. Men's prosperity is in their own hands; and no forms of government are, in themselves, of the least use. The first beginnings of prosperity must be in getting food, clothes, and fuel. These cannot be got either by the fine arts, or the military arts. Neither painting nor fighting feed men; nor can capital, in the form of money or machinery, feed them. All capital is imaginary or unimportant, except the quantity of food

* Observe, this is only asserted of its main principles; not of minor and accessory points. I may be entirely wrong in the explanation of a text, or mistake the parish schools of St. Matthias for St. Matthew's, over and over again. I have so large a field to work in that this cannot be helped. But none of these minor errors are of the least consequence to the business in hand.

existing in the world at any given moment. Finally, men cannot live by lending money to each other, and the conditions of such loan at present are absurd and deadly.

LETTER II. The nature of Rent. It is an exaction, by force of hand, for the maintenance of Squires: but had better at present be left to them. The nature of useful and useless employment. When employment is given by capitalists, it is sometimes useful, but oftener useless; sometimes moralizing, but oftener demoralizing. And we had therefore better employ ourselves, without any appeal to the capitalists; and to do this successfully, it must be with three resolutions; namely, to be personally honest, socially helpful, and conditionally obedient (vol. i. pp. 38, 39): explained in Letter VII. (vol. i. pp. 143–145.)

LETTER III. The power of Fate is independent of the Moral Law, but never supersedes it. Virtue ceases to be such, if expecting reward: it is therefore never materially rewarded. (I ought to have said, except as one of the appointed means of physical and mental health.) The Fates of England, and proper mode of studying them. Stories of Henry II. and Richard I.

LETTER IV. The value and nature of Education. It may be good, bad,—or neither the one nor the other. Knowledge is not education,

and can neither make us happy nor rich. Opening discussion of the nature and use of riches. Gold and diamonds are not riches, and the reader is challenged to specify their use. Opening discussion of the origin of wealth. It does not fall from heaven, (compare Letter VII., vol. i., p. 141), but is certainly obtainable, and has been generally obtained, by pillage of the poor. Modes in which education in virtue has been made costly to them, and education in vice cheap. (Vol. i. p. 79.)

LETTER V. The powers of Production. Extremity of modern folly in supposing there can be over-production. The power of machines. They cannot increase the possibilities of life, but only the possibilities of idleness. (Vol i. p. 95.) The things which are essential to life are mainly three material ones and three spiritual ones. First sketch of the proposed action of St. George's Company.

LETTER VI. The Elysium of modern days. This letter, written under the excitement of continual news of the revolution in Paris, is desultory, and limits itself to noticing some of the causes of that revolution: chiefly the idleness, disobedience, and covetousness of the richer and middle classes.

LETTER VII. The Elysium of ancient days. The definitions of true, and spurious, Communism.

Explanation of the design of true Communism, in Sir Thomas More's "Utopia." This letter, though treating of matters necessary to the whole work, yet introduces them prematurely, being written, incidentally, upon the ruin of Paris.

ASSISI, 18*th May*, 1874.

So ended, as Fors would have it, my abstraction, which I see Fors had her reason for stopping me in; else the abstraction would have needed farther abstracting. As it is, the reader may find in it the real gist of the remaining letters, and discern what a stiff business we have in hand,—rent, capital, and interest, all to be attacked at once! and a method of education shown to be possible in virtue, as cheaply as in vice!

I should have got my business, stiff though it may be, farther forward by this time, but for that same revolution in Paris, and burning of the Tuileries, which greatly confused my plan by showing me how much baser the human material I had to deal with, was, than I thought in beginning.

That a Christian army (or, at least, one which Saracens would have ranked with that they attacked, under the general name of Franks,) should fiercely devastate and rob an entire kingdom laid at their mercy by the worst distress;—that the first use made by this distressed country of the defeat of its armies would be to overthrow its government; and that, when its metropolis had all but perished

in conflagration during the contest between its army and mob, no warning should be taken by other civilized societies, but all go trotting on again, next week, in their own several roads to ruin, persistently, as they had trotted before,—bells jingling, and whips cracking,—these things greatly appalled me, finding I had only slime to build with instead of mortar; and shook my plan partly out of shape.

The frightfullest thing of all, to my mind, was the German temper, in its naïve selfishness; on which point, having been brought round again to it in my last letter, I have now somewhat more to say.

In the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 7th March, this year, under the head of 'This Evening's News,' appeared an article of which I here reprint the opening portion.

The well-known Hungarian author, Maurus Jokai, is at present a visitor in the German capital. As a man of note he easily obtained access to Prince Bismarck's study, where an interesting conversation took place, which M. Jokai reports pretty fully to the Hungarian journal the *Hon*:—

"The Prince was, as usual, easy in his manner, and communicative, and put a stop at the very outset to the Hungarian's attempt at ceremony. M. Jokai humorously remarked upon the prevalence of 'iron' in the surroundings of the 'iron' Prince. Among other things, there is an iron couch, and an iron safe, in which the Chancellor appears to keep his cigars. Prince Bismarck

was struck by the youthful appearance of his guest, who is ten years his junior, but whose writings he remembers to have seen reviewed long ago, in the *Augsburg Gazette* (at that time still, the Chancellor said, a clever paper), when he bore a lieutenant's commission. In the ensuing conversation, Prince Bismarck pointed out the paramount necessity to Europe of a consolidated State in the position of Austro-Hungary. It was mainly on that account that he concluded peace with so great despatch in 1866. Small independent States in the East would be a misfortune to Europe. Austria and Hungary must realize their mutual interdependence, and the necessity of being one. However, the dualist system of government must be preserved, because the task of developing the State, which on this side of the Leitha falls to the Germans, beyond that river naturally falls to the Magyars. The notion that Germany has an inclination to annex more land, Prince Bismarck designated as a myth. God preserve the Germans from such a wish! Whatever more territory they might acquire would probably be undermined by Papal influence, and they have enough of that already. Should the Germans of Austria want to be annexed by Germany, the Chancellor would feel inclined to declare war against them for that wish alone. A German Minister who should conceive the desire to annex part of Austria would deserve to be hanged—a punishment the Prince indicated by gesture. He does not wish to annex even a square foot of fresh territory, not as much as two pencils he kept on playing with during the conversation would cover. Those pencils, however, M. Jokai remarks, were big enough to serve as walking-sticks, and on the map they would have reached quite from Berlin to Trieste. Prince Bismarck went

on to justify his annexation of Alsace-Loraine by geographical necessity. Otherwise he would rather not have grafted the French twig upon the German tree. The French are enemies never to be appeased. *Take away from them the cook, the tailor, and the hairdresser, and what remains of them is a copper-coloured Indian.*"

Now it does not matter whether Prince Bismarck ever said this, or not. That the saying should be attributed to him in a leading journal, without indication of doubt or surprise, is enough to show what the German temper is publicly recognized to be. And observe what a sentence it is—thus attributed to him. The French are only copper-coloured Indians, finely dressed. This said of the nation which gave us Charlemagne, St. Louis, St. Bernard, and Joan of Arc; which founded the central type of chivalry in the myth of Roland; which showed the utmost height of valour yet recorded in history, in the literal life of Guiscard; and which built Chartres Cathedral!

But the French are not what they were! No; nor the English, for that matter; probably we have fallen the farther of the two: meantime the French still retain, at the root, the qualities they always had; and of one of these, a highly curious and commendable one, I wish you to take some note to-day.

Among the minor nursery tales with which my mother allowed me to relieve the study of the great nursery tale of Genesis, my favourite was Miss

Edgeworth's "Frank." The authoress chose this for the boy's name, because she meant him to be a type of Frankness, or openness of heart:—truth of heart, that is to say, *liking* to lay itself open. You are in the habit, I believe, some of you, still, of speaking occasionally of English Frankness;—not recognizing, through the hard clink of the letter K, that you are only talking, all the while, of English Frenchness. Still less when you count your cargoes of gold from San Francisco, do you pause to reflect what San means, or what Francis means, without the Co;—or how it came to pass that the power of this mountain town of Assisi, where not only no gold can be dug, but where St. Francis forbade his Company to dig it anywhere else—came to give names to Devil's towns far across the Atlantic—(and by the way you may note how clumsy the Devil is at christening; for if by chance he gets a fresh York all to himself, he never has any cleverer notion than to call it 'New York'; and in fact, having no mother-wit from his dam, is obliged very often to put up with the old names which were given by Christians,—Nombre di Dios, Trinidad, Vera Cruz, and the like, even when he has all his own way with everything else in the places, but their names).

But to return. You have lately had a fine notion, have you not, of English Liberty as opposed to French Slavery?

Well, whatever your English liberties may be, the French knew what the word meant, before you.

For France, if you will consider of it, means nothing else than the Country of Franks;—the country of a race so intensely Free that they for evermore gave name to Freedom. The Greeks sometimes got their own way, as a mob; but nobody, meaning to talk of liberty, calls it 'Greekness.' The Romans knew better what Libertas meant, and their word for it has become common enough, in that straitened form, on your English tongue; but nobody calls it 'Romanness.' But at last comes a nation called the Franks; and they are so inherently free and noble in their natures, that their name becomes the word for the virtue; and when you now want to talk of freedom of heart, you say Frankness, and for the last political privilege which you have it so much in your English minds to get, you haven't so much as an English word, but must call it by the French one, 'Franchise.'*

"Freedom of *heart*," you observe, I say. Not the English freedom of Insolence, according to

* I intended in this note to have given some references to the first use of the word Franc, as an adjective. But the best dictionary-makers seem to have been foiled by it. "I recollect," (an Oxford friend writes to me,) "Clovis called his axe 'Francisca' when he threw it to determine by its fall where he should build a church," and in Littré's dictionary a root is suggested, in the Anglo-Saxon Franca, 'javelin.' But I think these are all collateral, not original uses. I am not sure even when the word came to be used for the current silver coin of France: that, at least, must be ascertainable. It is curious that in no fit of Liberty and Equality, the anti-Imperialists have thought of calling their golden coins 'Citizens' instead of 'Napoleons'; nor even their sous, Sansculottes.

Mr. B., (see above, Letter 29,) but pure French openness of heart, Fanchette's and her husband's frankness, the source of joy, and courtesy, and civility, and passing softness of human meeting of kindly glance with glance. Of which Franchise, in her own spirit Person, here is the picture for you, from the French Romance of the Rose,—a picture which English Chaucer was thankful to copy.

"And after all those others came Franchise,
Who was not brown, nor grey,
But she was white as snow.
And she had not the nose of an Orleanois.
Aussi had she the nose long and straight.
Eyes green, and laughing—vaulted eyebrows ;
She had her hair blonde and long,
And she was simple as a dove.
The body she had sweet, and brightly bred ;
And she dared not do, nor say
To any one, anything she ought not.
And if she knew of any man
Who was in sorrow for love of her,
So soon she had great pity for him,
For she had the heart so pitiful,
And so sweet and so lovely,
That no one suffered pain about her,
But she would help him all she could.
And she wore a surquanye
Which was of no coarse cloth ;
There's none so rich as far as Arras.
And it was so gathered up, and so joined together,
That there was not a single point of it
Which was not set in its exact place, rightly.
Much well was dressed Franchise,
For no robe is so pretty
As the surquanye for a demoiselle.

A girl is more gentle and more darling
In surquanye than in coat,
And the white surquanye
Signifies that sweet and frank
Is she who puts it on her."

May I ask you now to take to heart those two lines of this French description of Frenchness:

"And she dared not do, nor say
To any one, anything she ought not."

That is not your modern notion of Frenchness, or franchise, or libertas, or liberty—for all these are synonyms for the same virtue. And yet the strange thing is that the lowest types of the modern French grisette are the precise corruption of this beautiful Franchise: and still retain, at their worst, some of the grand old qualities; the absolute sources of corruption being the neglect of their childhood by the upper classes, the abandonment to their own resources, and the development therefore of "Liberty and Independence," in your beautiful English, *not* French, sense.

"Livrée à elle-meme depuis l'àge de treize ans, habituée à ne compter que sur elle seule, elle avait de la vie une expérience dont j'étais confondue. De ce Paris où elle était née, elle savait tout, elle connaissait tout.

Je n'avais pas idée d'une si complete absence de sens moral, d'une si inconsciente dépravation, d'une impudeur si effrontément naïve.

La régle de sa conduite, c'était sa fantaisie, son instinct, le caprice du moment.

Elle aimait les longues stations dans les cafés, les mélodrames entremélés de chopes et d'oranges pendant les entr'actes, les parties de canot à Asniéres, et surtout, et avant tout, le bal.

Elle était comme chez elle à l'Elysée—Montmartre et au Château-Rouge; elle y connaissait tout le monde, le chef d'orchestre la saluait, ce dont elle était extraordinairement fiére, et quantité de gens la tutoyaient.

Je l'accompagnais partout, dans les commencements, et bien que je n'étais pas précisément naïve, ni génée par les scrupules de mon éducation, je fus tellement consternée de l'incroyable désordre de sa vie, que je ne pus m'empécher de lui en faire quelques représentations.

Elle se facha tout rouge.

Tu fais ce qui te plait, me dit-elle, laisse-moi faire ce qui me convient.

C'est un justice que je lui dois: jamais elle n'essaya sur moi son influence, jamais elle ne m'engagea à suivre son exemple. Ivre de liberté, elle respectait la liberté des autres."

Such is the form which Franchise has taken under republican instruction. But of the true Franchise of Charlemagne and Roland, there were, you must note also, two distinct forms. In the last stanzas of the Chant de Roland, Normandy and France have two distinct epithets,—"Normandie, la franche; France, la solue" (soluta). "*Frank* Normandy; *Loose* France." Solute;—we, adding the dis, use the words loose and dissolute only in evil sense. But

'France la solue' has an entirely lovely meaning. The frankness of Normandy is the soldier's virtue; but the unbinding, so to speak, of France, is the peasant's.

> "And having seen that lovely maid,
> Why should I fear to say
> That she is ruddy, fleet, and strong,
> And down the rocks can leap along
> Like rivulets in May?"

It is curious that the most beautiful descriptive line in all Horace,

> "montibus altis
> Levis crepante lympha desilit pede,"

comes in the midst of the dream of the blessed islands which are to be won by following the founders of—what city, think you? The city that first sang the "Marseillaise."

> "Juppiter illa *piae* secrevit litora genti."

Recollect that line, my French readers, if I chance to find any, this month, nor less the description of those 'arva beata' as if of your own South France; and then consider also those prophetic lines, true of Paris as of Rome,—

> "Nec fera coerulea domuit Germania pube.
> *Impia*, perdemus devoti sanguinis aetas."

Consider them, I say, and deeply, thinking over the full force of those words, "devoti sanguinis," and of the ways in which the pure blood of Normandie la franche, and France la solue, has corrupted itself,

and become accursed. Had I but time to go into the history of that word 'devoveo,' what a piece of philology it would lead us into! But, for another kind of opposition to the sweet Franchise of old time, take this sentence of description of another French maiden, by the same author from whom I have just quoted the sketch of the grisette:

"C'était une vieille fille d'une cinquantaine d'années, sèche et jaune, avec un grand nez d'oiseau de proie, très noble, encore plus dévote, joueuse comme la dame de pique en personne, et médisante à faire battre des montagnes."

You see what accurate opposition that gives you of another kind, to Franchise. You even have the 'nez d'Orleanois' specified, which the song of the Rose is so careful to tell you Franchise had not.

Here is another illustrative sentence:

"La colère, à la fin, une de ces terribles colères blanches de dévote, chassait des flots de bile au cerveau de Mademoiselle de la Rochecardeau, et blémissait ses levres."

These three sentences I have taken from two novels of Emile Gaboriau, "L'argent des autres," and "La Degringolade." They are average specimens of modern French light literature, with its characteristic qualities and defects, and are both of them in many respects worth careful study; but chiefly in the representation they give, partly with conscious blame, and partly in unconscious corruption, of the Devoti sanguinis aetas; with which, if you would compare old France accurately,

read first Froude's sketch of the life of Bishop Hugo of Lincoln, and think over the scene between him and Cœur de Lion.

You have there, as in life before you, two typical Frenchmen of the twelfth century—a true king, and a true priest, representing the powers which the France of that day contrived to get set over her, and did, on the whole, implicitly and with her heart obey.

They are not altogether—by taking the dancing-master and the hairdresser away from them—reduced to copper-coloured Indians.

If, next, you will take the pains—and it will need some pains, for the book is long and occasionally tiresome—to read the Degringolade, you will find it nevertheless worth your while; for it gives you a modern Frenchman's account of the powers which France in the nineteenth century contrived to get set over her; and obeyed—not with her heart, but restively, like an ill-bred dog or mule, which have no honour in their obedience, but bear the chain and bit all the same.

But there is a farther and much more important reason for my wish that you should read this novel. It gives you types of existent Frenchmen and Frenchwomen of a very different class. They are, indeed, only heroes and heroines in a quite second-rate piece of literary work. But these stereotypes, nevertheless, have living originals. There is to be found in France, as truly the Commandant Delorge, as the Comte de Combelaine.

And as truly Mademoiselle de Maillefert as the Duchesse de Maumussy. How is it, then, that the Count and Duchess command everything in France, and that the Commandant and Demoiselle command nothing?—that the best they can do is to get leave to live—unknown, and unthought-of? The question, believe me, is for England also; and a very pressing one.

Of the frantic hatred of all religion developed in the French republican mind, the sentences I have quoted are interesting examples. I have not time to speak of them in this letter, but they struck me sharply as I corrected the press to-day; for I had been standing most part of the morning by St. Paul's grave, thinking over his work in the world. A bewildered peasant, from some green dingle of Campagna, who had seen me kneel when the Host passed, and took me therefore to be a human creature and a friend, asked me 'where St. Paul was'?

'There, underneath,' I answered.

'There?' he repeated, doubtfully,—as dissatisfied.

'Yes,' I answered; 'his body at least;—his head is at the Lateran.'

'Il suo corpo,' again he repeated, still as in discontent. Then, after a pause, 'E la sua statua?'

Such a wicked thing to ask for that! wasn't it, my Evangelical friends? You would so much rather have had him ask for Hudson's!

LETTER XLIV

THE SQUIRREL CAGE: ENGLISH SERVITUDE

ROME, *6th June*, 1874.

THE poor Campagna herdsman, whose seeking for St. Paul's statue the Professor of Fine Art in the University of Oxford so disgracefully failed to assist him in, had been kneeling nearer the line of procession of the Corpus Domini than I;—in fact, quite among the rose-leaves which had been strewed for a carpet round the aisles of the Basilica. I grieve to say that I was shy of the rose-bestrewn path, myself; for the crowd waiting at the side of it had mixed up the rose-leaves with spittle so richly as to make quite a pink pomatum of them. And, indeed, the living temples of the Holy Ghost which in any manner bestir themselves here among the temples,—whether of Roman gods or Christian saints,—have merely and simply the two great operations upon them of filling their innermost adyta with dung, and making their pavements slippery with spittle; the Pope's new tobacco manufactory under the Palatine, —an infinitely more important object now, in all views of Rome from the west, than either the Palatine or the Capitol,—greatly aiding and encouraging this especial form of lustration: while

the still more ancient documents of Egyptian religion—the obelisks of the Piazza del Popolo, and of the portico of St. Peter's—are entirely eclipsed by the obelisks of our English religion, lately elevated, in full view from the Pincian and the Montorio, with smoke coming out of the top of them. And farther, the entire eastern district of Rome, between the two Basilicas of the Lateran and St. Lorenzo, is now one mass of volcanic ruin;—a desert of dust and ashes, the lust of wealth exploding there, out of a crater deeper than Etna's, and raging, as far as it can reach, in one frantic desolation of whatever is lovely, or holy, or memorable, in the central city of the world.

For there is one fixed idea in the mind of every European progressive politician, at this time; namely, that by a certain application of Financial Art, and by the erection of a certain quantity of new buildings on a colossal scale, it will be possible for society hereafter to pass its entire life in eating, smoking, harlotry, and talk; without doing anything whatever with its hands or feet of a laborious character. And as these new buildings, whose edification is a main article of this modern political faith and hope,—(being required for gambling and dining in on a large scale),—cannot be raised without severely increased taxation of the poorer classes, (here in Italy direct, and in all countries consisting in the rise of price in all articles of food—wine alone in Italy costing just ten times what it did ten years ago,) and this increased taxation and

distress are beginning to be felt too grievously to be denied; nor only so, but—which is still less agreeable to modern politicians—with slowly dawning perception of their true causes,—one finds also the popular journalists, for some time back addressing themselves to the defence of Taxation, and Theft in general, after this fashion.

"The wealth in the world may practically be regarded as infinitely great. It is not true that what one man appropriates becomes thereupon useless to others, and it is also untrue that force or fraud, direct or indirect, are the principal, or, indeed, that they are at all common or important, modes of acquiring wealth."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan. 14th, 1869.*

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* The passage continues thus, curiously enough,—for the parallel of the boat at sea is precisely that which I have given, in *true* explanation of social phenomena:—

"The notion that when one man becomes rich he makes others poor, will be found upon examination to depend upon the assumption that there is in the world a fixed quantity of wealth; that when one man appropriates to himself a large amount of it, he excludes all others from any benefit arising from it, and that at the same time he forces some one else to be content with less than he would otherwise have had. Society, in short, must be compared to a boat at sea, in which there is a certain quantity of fresh water, and a certain number of shipwrecked passengers. In that case, no doubt, the water drunk by one is of no use to the rest, and if one drinks more, others must drink less, as the water itself is a fixed quantity. Moreover, no one man would be able to get more than a rateable share, except by superior force, or by some form of deceit, because the others would prevent him. The mere statement of this view ought to be a sufficient exposure of the fundamental error of the commonplaces which we are considering."

The philosophical journalist, after some further contemptuous statement of the vulgar views on this subject, conveniently dispenses (as will be seen by reference to the end of the clause in the note) with the defence of his own. I will undertake the explanation of what was, perhaps, even to himself, not altogether clear in his impressions. If a burglar ever carries off the Editor's plate-basket, the bereaved Editor will console himself by reflecting that "it is not true that what one man appropriates becomes thereupon useless to others:"—for truly (he will thus proceed to finer investigation,) this plate of mine, melted down, after being transitionally serviceable to the burglar, will enter again into the same functions among the silver of the world which it had in my own possession; so that the intermediate benefit to the burglar may be regarded as entirely a form of trade profit, and a kind of turning over of capital. And "it is also untrue that force or fraud, direct or indirect, are the principal, or indeed that they are at all common or important, modes of acquiring wealth,"—for this poor thief, with his crowbar and jemmy, does but disfurnish my table for a day; while I, with my fluent pen, can replenish it any number of times over, by the beautiful expression of my opinions for the public benefit. But what manner of fraud, or force, there may be in living by the sale of one's opinions, instead of knowledges; and what quantity of true knowledge on any subject whatsoever—moral, political, scientific, or artistic—forms at present the total stock in

trade of the Editors of the European Press, our Pall Mall Editor has very certainly not considered.

"The wealth in the world practically infinite," —is it? Then it seems to me, the poor may ask, with more reason than ever before, Why have we not our share of Infinity? We thought, poor ignorants, that we were only the last in the scramble; we submitted, believing that somebody must be last, and somebody first. But if the mass of good things be inexhaustible, and there are horses for everybody,—why is not every beggar on horseback? And, for my own part, why should the question be put to me so often,—which I am sick of answering and answering again,—"How, with our increasing population, are we to live without Machinery?" For if the wealth be already infinite, what need of machinery to make more? Alas, if it *could* make more, what a different world this might be. Arkwright and Stephenson would deserve statues indeed, —as much as St. Paul. If all the steam engines in England, and all the coal in it, with all their horse and ass power put together, could produce—so much as one grain of corn! The last time this perpetually recurring question about machinery was asked me, it was very earnestly and candidly pressed, by a master manufacturer, who honestly desired to do in his place what was serviceable to England, and honourable to himself. I answered at some length, in private letters, of which I asked and obtained his leave to print some parts in Fors. They may as

well find their place in this number; and for preface to them, here is a piece, long kept by me, concerning railroads, which may advisably now be read.

Of modern machinery for locomotion, my readers, I suppose, thought me writing in ill-temper, when I said in one of the letters on the childhood of Scott, "infernal means of locomotion"? Indeed, I am always compelled to write, as always compelled to live, in ill-temper. But I never set down a single word but with the serenest purpose. I *meant* "infernal" in the most perfect sense the word will bear.

For instance. The town of Ulverstone is twelve miles from me, by four miles of mountain road beside Coniston lake, three through a pastoral valley, five by the seaside. A healthier or lovelier walk would be difficult to find.

In old times, if a Coniston peasant had any business at Ulverstone, he walked to Ulverstone; spent nothing but shoe-leather on the road, drank at the streams, and if he spent a couple of batz when he got to Ulverstone, "it was the end of the world." But now, he would never think of doing such a thing! He first walks three miles in a contrary direction, to a railroad station, and then travels by railroad twenty-four miles to Ulverstone, paying two shillings fare. During the twenty-four miles transit, he is idle, dusty, stupid; and either more hot or cold than is pleasant to him. In either case he drinks beer at two or three of the stations,

passes his time, between them, with anybody he can find, in talking without having anything to talk of; and such talk always becomes vicious. He arrives at Ulverstone, jaded, half drunk, and otherwise demoralized, and three shillings, at least, poorer than in the morning. Of that sum a shilling has gone for beer, threepence to a railway shareholder, threepence in coals, and eighteenpence has been spent in employing strong men in the vile mechanical work of making and driving a machine, instead of his own legs, to carry the drunken lout. The results, absolute loss and demoralization to the poor, on all sides, and iniquitous gain to the rich. Fancy, if you saw the railway officials actually employed in carrying the countryman bodily on their backs to Ulverstone, what you would think of the business! And because they waste ever so much iron and fuel besides to do it, you think it a profitable one!

And for comparison of the advantages of old times and new, for travellers of higher order, hear how Scott's excursions used to be made.

"Accordingly, during seven successive years, Scott made a raid, as he called it, into Liddesdale, with Mr. Shortreed for his guide, exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined peel from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district; the first, indeed, that ever appeared there was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn

nor public-house of any kind in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead; gathering, wherever they went, songs and tunes, and occasionally more tangible relics of antiquity—even such 'a rowth of auld nicknackets' as Burns ascribes to Captain Grose. To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border'; and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of the most charming of his prose works. But how soon he had any definite object before him in his researches seems very doubtful. 'He was makin' himsel' a' the time,' said Mr. Shortreed; 'but he didna ken maybe what he was about, till years had passed. At first he thought o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun.'

'It was that same season, I think,' says Mr. Shortreed, 'that Sir Walter got from Dr. Elliot the large old border war horn, which ye may still see hanging in the armoury at Abbotsford. How great he was when he was made master o' that! I believe it had been found in Hermitage Castle—and one of the doctor's servants had used it many a day as a grease-horn for his scythe before they had discovered its history. When cleaned out, it was never a hair the worse; the original chain, hoop, and mouthpiece of steel were all entire, just as you

now see them. Sir Walter carried it home all the way from Liddesdale to Jedburgh slung about his neck like Johnny Gilpin's bottle, while I was entrusted with an ancient bridle-bit, which we had likewise picked up.

> "'The feint o' pride—nae pride had he, . . .
> A lang kail-gully hung down by his side,
> And a great meikle nowt-horn to rout on had he.'

And meikle and sair we routed on't, and 'hotched and blew wi' micht and main.' O what pleasant days! and then *a' the nonsense we had cost us nothing. We never put hand in pocket* for a week on end. Toll-bars there were none, and indeed I think our haill charges were a feed o' corn to our horses in the gangin' and comin' at Riccartoun mill."

This absolute economy,* of course, could only exist when travelling was so rare that patriarchal hospitality could still be trusted for its lodging. But the hospitality of the inn need not be less considerate or true because the inn's master lives in his occupation. Even in these days, I have had no more true or kind friend than the

* The reader might at first fancy that the economy was not "absolute," but that the expenses of the traveller were simply borne by his host. Not so; the host only gave what he in his turn received, when he also travelled. Every man thus carried his home with him, and to travel, was merely to walk or ride from place to place, instead of round one's own house. (See Saunders Fairford's expostulation with Alan on the charges incurred at Noble House.)

now dead Mrs. Eisenkraemer of the *old* Union Inn at Chamouni; and an innkeeper's daughter in the Oberland taught me that it was still possible for a Swiss girl to be refined, imaginative, and pure-hearted, though she waited on her father's guests, and though these guests were often vulgar and insolent English travellers. For she had been bred in the rural districts of happy olden days,—to which, as it chances, my thoughts first turned, in the following answer to my English manufacturing friend.

On any given farm in Switzerland or Bavaria, fifty years ago, the master and his servants lived, in abundance, on the produce of their ground, without machinery, and exchanged some of its surplus produce for Lyons velvet and Hartz silver, (produced by the unhappy mechanists and miners of those localities,) whereof the happy peasant made jackets and bodices, and richly adorned the same with precious chain-work. It is not more than ten years since I saw in a farm-shed near Thun, three handsome youths and three comely girls, all in well-fitting, pretty, and snow-white shirt and chemisette, threshing corn with a steady shower of timed blows, as skilful in their—cadence, shall we, literally, say?—as the most exquisitely performed music, and as rapid as its swiftest notes. There was no question for any of them, whether they should have their dinner when they had earned it, nor the slightest chance of any of them going in rags through the winter.

That is entirely healthy, happy, and wise human life. Not a theoretical or Utopian state at all; but one which over large districts of the world has long existed, and must, thank God, in spite of British commerce and its consequences, for ever, somewhere, exist.

But the farm, we will say, gets over-populous, (it always does, of course, under ordinary circumstances;) that is to say, the ground no longer affords corn and milk enough for the people on it. Do you suppose you will make more of the corn, because you now thresh it with a machine? So far from needing to do so, you have more hands to employ than you had—can have twelve flails going instead of six. You make your twelve human creatures stand aside, and thresh your corn with a steam engine. You gain time, do you? What's the use of time to you? did it not hang heavy enough on your hands before? You thresh your entire farm produce, let us say, in twelve minutes. Will that make it one grain more, to feed the twelve mouths? Most assuredly, the soot and stench of your steam engine will make your crop *less* next year, but not one grain more can you have to-day.* But you don't mean to use your engines to thresh with or plough with? Well, that is one point of

* But what is to be done, then? Emigrate, of course; but under different laws from those of modern emigration. Don't emigrate to China, poison Chinamen, and teach them to make steam engines, and then import Chinamen, to dig iron *here*. But see next Fors.

common sense gained. What will you do with them, then?—spin and weave cotton, sell the articles you manufacture, and buy food? Very good; then somewhere there must be people still living as *you* once did,—that is to say, producing more corn and milk than they want, and able to give it to you in exchange for your cotton, or velvet, or what not, which you weave with your steam. Well, *those* people, wherever they are, and whoever they may be, are your lords and masters thenceforth. *They* are living happy and wise human lives, and are served by you, their mechanics and slaves. Day after day your souls will become more mechanical, more servile: also you will go on multiplying, wanting more food, and more; you will have to sell cheaper and cheaper, work longer and longer, to buy your food. At last, do what you can, you can make no more, or the people who have the corn will not want any more; and your increasing population will necessarily come to a quite imperative stop—by starvation, preceded necessarily by revolution and massacre.

And now examine the facts about England in this broad light.

She has a vast quantity of ground still food-producing, in corn, grass, cattle, or game. With that territory she educates her squire, or typical gentleman, and his tenantry, to whom, together, she owes all her power in the world. With another large portion of territory,—now continually on the

increase,—she educates a mercenary population, ready to produce any quantity of bad articles to anybody's order; population which every hour that passes over them makes acceleratingly avaricious, immoral, and insane. In the increase of that kind of territory and its people, her ruin is just as certain as if she were deliberately exchanging her corn-growing land, and her heaven above it, for a soil of arsenic, and rain of nitric acid.

"Have the Arkwrights and Stephensons, then, done nothing but harm?" Nothing; but the root of all the mischief is not in Arkwrights or Stephensons; nor in rogues or mechanics. The real root of it is the crime of the squire himself. And the method of that crime is thus. A certain quantity of the food produced by the country is paid annually by it into the squire's hand, in the form of rent, privately, and taxes, publicly. If he uses this food to support a food-producing population, he increases daily the strength of the country and his own; but if he uses it to support an idle population, or one producing merely trinkets in iron, or gold, or other rubbish, he steadily weakens the country, and debases himself.

Now the action of the squire for the last fifty years has been, broadly, to take the food from the ground of his estate, and carry it to London, where he feeds with it* a vast number of builders,

* The writings of our vulgar political economists, calling money only a "medium of exchange," blind the foolish public conveniently to all the practical actions of the machinery of the

upholsterers, (one of them charged me five pounds for a footstool the other day,) carriage and harness makers, dress-makers, grooms, footmen, bad musicians, bad painters, gamblers, and harlots, and in supply of the wants of these main classes, a vast number of shopkeepers of minor useless articles. The muscles and the time of this enormous population being wholly unproductive—(for of course time spent in the mere process of sale is unproductive, and much more that of the footman and groom, while that of the vulgar upholsterer, jeweller, fiddler, and painter, etc., etc., is not only unproductive, but mischievous,) —the entire mass of this London population do nothing whatever either to feed or clothe themselves; and their vile life preventing them from all rational entertainment, they are compelled to seek some pastime in a vile literature, the demand for which again occupies another enormous class, who do nothing to feed or dress themselves; finally, the vain disputes of this vicious population give employment to the vast industry of the lawyers and their

currency. Money is not a medium of exchange, but a token of right. I have, suppose, at this moment, ten, twenty, or thirty thousand pounds. That signifies that, as compared with a man who has only ten pounds, I can claim possession of, call for, and do what I like with a thousand, or two thousand, or three thousand times as much of the valuable things existing in the country. The peasant accordingly gives the squire a certain number of these tokens or counters, which give the possessor a right to claim so much corn or meat. The squire gives these tokens to the various persons in town, enumerated in the text, who then claim the corn and meat from the peasant, returning him the counters, which he calls "price," and gives to the squire again next year.

clerks, who similarly do nothing to feed or dress themselves.

Now the peasants might still be able to supply this enormous town population with food, (in the form of the squire's rent,) but it cannot, without machinery, supply the flimsy dresses, toys, metal work, and other rubbish, belonging to their accursed life. Hence over the whole country the sky is blackened and the air made pestilent, to supply London and other such towns * with their iron railings, vulgar upholstery, jewels, toys, liveries, lace, and other means of dissipation and dishonour of life. Gradually the country people cannot even supply food to the voracity of the vicious centre; and it is necessary to import food from other countries, giving in exchange any kind of commodity we can attract their itching desires for, and produce by machinery. The tendency of the entire national energy is therefore to approximate more and more to the state of a squirrel in a cage, or a turnspit in a wheel, fed by foreign masters with nuts and dog's-meat. And indeed, when we rightly conceive the relation of London to the country, the sight of it becomes more fantastic and wonderful than any dream. Hyde Park, in the season, is the great rotatory form of the vast squirrel-cage; round and round it go the idle company, in their reversed streams, urging themselves to their necessary exercise. They cannot with safety even eat their nuts, without so much

* Compare, especially, Letter XXIX., pp. 98–102.

'revolution' as shall, in Venetian language, 'comply with the demands of hygiene.' Then they retire into their boxes, with due quantity of straw; the Belgravian and Piccadillian streets outside the railings being, when one sees clearly, nothing but the squirrel's box at the side of his wires. And then think of all the rest of the metropolis as the creation and ordinance of these squirrels, that they may squeak and whirl to their satisfaction, and yet be fed. Measure the space of its entirely miserable life. Begin with that diagonal which I struck from Regent Circus to Drury Lane; examine it, house by house; then go up from Drury Lane to St. Giles' Church, look into Church Lane there, and explore your Seven Dials and Warwick Street; and remember this is the very centre of the mother city,—precisely between its Parks, its great Library and Museum, its principal Theatres, and its Bank. Then conceive the East-end; and the melancholy Islington and Pentonville districts; then the ghastly spaces of southern suburb—Vauxhall, Lambeth, the Borough, Wapping, and Bermondsey. All this is the nidification of those Park Squirrels. This is the thing they have produced round themselves; this their work in the world. When they rest from their squirrellian revolutions, and die in the Lord, and their works do follow them, *these* are what will follow them. Lugubrious march of the Waterloo Road, and the Borough, and St. Giles's; the shadows of all the Seven Dials having fetched their last compass. New Jerusalem, prepared as a bride,

of course, opening her gates to them;—but, pertinaciously attendant, Old Jewry outside. "Their works do follow them."

For these streets are indeed what they have built; their inhabitants the people they have chosen to educate. They took the bread and milk and meat from the people of their fields; they gave it to feed, and retain here in their service, this fermenting mass of unhappy human beings,—news-mongers, novel-mongers, picture-mongers, poison-drink-mongers, lust and death-mongers; the whole smoking mass of it one vast dead-marine store-shop,—accumulation of wreck of the Dead Sea, with every activity in it, a form of putrefaction.

Some personal matters were touched upon in my friend's reply to this letter, and I find nothing more printable of the correspondence but this following fragment or two.

"But what are you to do, having got into this mechanical line of life?"

You must persevere in it, and do the best you can for the present, but resolve to get out of it as soon as may be. The one essential point is to know thoroughly that it is wrong; how to get out of it, you can decide afterwards, at your leisure.

"But somebody must weave by machinery, and dig in mines: else how could one have one's velvet and silver chains?"

Whatever machinery is needful for human purposes can be driven by wind or water; the Thames alone could drive mills enough to weave velvet and

silk for all England. But even mechanical occupation not involving pollution of the atmosphere must be as limited as possible; for it invariably degrades. You may use your slave in your silver mine, or at your loom, to avoid such labour yourself, if you honestly believe you have brains to be better employed;—or you may yourself, for the service of others, honourably *become* their slave; and, in benevolent degradation, dig silver or weave silk, making yourself semi-spade, or semi-worm. But you must not eventually—for no purpose or motive whatsoever—live amidst smoke and filth, nor allow others to do so; you must see that your slaves are as comfortable and safe as their employment permits, and that they are paid wages high enough to allow them to leave it often for redemption and rest.

Eventually, I say; how fast events may move, none of us know; in our compliance with them, let us at least be intelligently patient—if at all; not blindly patient.

For instance, there is nothing really more monstrous in any recorded savagery or absurdity of mankind, than that governments should be able to get money for any folly they choose to commit, by selling to capitalists the right of taxing future generations to the end of time. All the cruellest wars inflicted, all the basest luxuries grasped by the idle classes, are thus paid for by the poor a hundred times over. And yet I am obliged to keep my money in the funds or the bank, because I know

no other mode of keeping it safe; and if I refused to take the interest, I should only throw it into the hands of the very people who would use it for those evil purposes, or, at all events, for less good than I can. Nevertheless it is daily becoming a more grave question with me what it may presently be right to do. It may be better to diminish private charities, and much more, my own luxury of life, than to comply in any sort with a national sin. But I am not agitated or anxious in the matter: content to know my principle, and to work steadily towards better fulfilment of it.

And this is all that I would ask of my correspondent or of any other man,—that he should know what he is about, and be steady in his line of advance or retreat. I know myself to be an usurer as long as I take interest on any money whatsoever. I confess myself such, and abide whatever shame or penalty may attach to usury, until I can withdraw myself from the system. So my correspondent says he must abide by his post. I think so too. A naval captain, though I should succeed in persuading him of the wickedness of war, would in like manner, if he were wise, abide at his post; nay, would be entirely traitorous and criminal if he at once deserted it. Only let us all be sure what our positions are; and if, as it is said, the not living by interest and the resolutely making everything as good as can be, are incompatible with the present state of society, let us, though compelled to remain usurers and

makers of bad things, at least not deceive ourselves as to the nature of our acts and life.

Leaving thus the personal question, how the great courses of life are to be checked or changed, to each man's conscience and discretion,—this following answer I would make in all cases to the inquiry, 'What can I *do?*'

If the present state of this so-called rich England is so essentially miserable and poverty-stricken that honest men must always live from hand to mouth, while speculators make fortunes by cheating them out of their labour, and if, therefore, no sum can be set aside for charity,—the paralyzed honest men can certainly do little for the present. But, with what can be spared for charity, if *any*thing, do this; buy ever so small a bit of ground, in the midst of the worst back deserts of our manufacturing towns; six feet square, if no more can be had,—nay, the size of a grave, if you will, but buy it *freehold*, and make a garden of it, by hand-labour; a garden visible to all men, and cultivated *for* all men of that place. If absolutely nothing will grow in it, then have herbs carried there in pots. Force the bit of ground into order, cleanliness, *green* or *coloured* aspect. What difficulties you have in doing this are your best subjects of thought; the good you will do in doing this, the best in your present power.

What the best in your ultimate power may be, will depend on the action of the English landlord; for observe, we have only to separate the facts of the Swiss farm to ascertain what they are with

respect to any state. We have only to ask what quantity of food it produces, how much it exports in exchange for other articles, and how much it imports in exchange for other articles. The food-producing countries have the power of educating gentlemen and gentlewomen if they please,—they are the lordly and masterful countries. Those which exchange mechanical or artistic productions for food are servile, and necessarily in process of time will be ruined. Next Fors, therefore, will be written for any Landlords who wish to be true Workmen in their vocation; and, according to the first law of the St. George's Company, 'to do good work, whether they die or live.'

LETTER XLV

MY LORD DELAYETH HIS COMING:—THE BRITISH SQUIRE

LUCCA, *2nd August*, 1874.

THE other day, in the Sacristan's cell at Assisi, I got into a great argument with the Sacristan himself, about the prophet Isaiah. It had struck me that I should like to know what sort of a person his wife was: and I asked my good host, over our morning's coffee, whether the Church knew anything about her. Brother Antonio, however, instantly and energetically denied that he ever had a wife. He was a 'Castissimo profeta,'—how could I fancy anything so horrible of him! Vainly I insisted that, since he had children, he must either have been married, or been under special orders, like the prophet Hosea. But my Protestant Bible was good for nothing, said the Sacristan. Nay, I answered, I never read, usually, in anything later than a thirteenth century text; let him produce me one out of the convent library, and see if I couldn't find Shearjashub in it. The discussion dropped upon this,—because the library was inaccessible at the moment; and no printed Vulgate to be found. But I think of it again to-day, because I have just got into another puzzle about Isaiah,—to wit, what

he means by calling himself a "man of unclean lips."* And that is a vital question, surely, to all persons venturing to rise up, as teachers;—vital, at all events, to me, here, and now, for these following reasons.

Thirty years ago, I began my true study of Italian, and all other art,—here, beside the statue of Ilaria di Caretto, recumbent on her tomb. It turned me from the study of landscape to that of life, being then myself in the fullest strength of labour, and joy of hope.

And I was thinking, last night, that the drawing which I am now trying to make of it, in the weakness and despair of declining age, might possibly be the last I should make before quitting the study of Italian, and even all other, art, for ever.

I have no intent of doing so: quite the reverse of that. But I feel the separation between me and the people round me, so bitterly, in the world of my own which they cannot enter; and I see their entrance to it now barred so absolutely by their own resolves, (they having deliberately and self-congratulatingly chosen for themselves the Manchester Cotton Mill instead of the Titian,) that it becomes every hour more urged upon me that I shall have to leave,—not father and mother, for they have left me; nor children, nor lands, for I have none,—but at least this spiritual land and fair domain of human art and natural peace,—because

* Read Isaiah vi. through carefully.

I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and therefore am undone, because mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.

I say it, and boldly. Who else is there of you who can stand with me, and say the same? It is an age of progress, you tell me. Is your progress chiefly in this, that you *cannot* see the King, the Lord of Hosts, but only Baal, instead of Him?

"The Sun is God," said Turner, a few weeks before he died with the setting rays of it on his face.

He meant it, as Zoroaster meant it; and was a Sun-worshipper of the old breed. But the unheard-of foulness of your modern faith in Baal is its being faith *without* worship. The Sun is—*not* God,—you say. Not by any manner of means. A gigantic railroad accident, perhaps,—a coruscant δῖνος,—put on the throne of God like a limelight; and able to serve you, eventually, much better than ever God did.

I repeat my challenge. You,—Te-Deum-singing princes, colonels, bishops, choristers, and what else,—do any of you know what Te means? or what Deum? or what Laudamus? Have any of your eyes seen the King, or His Sabaoth? Will any of you say, with your hearts, 'Heaven and earth are full of His glory; and in His name we will set up our banners, and do good work, whether we live or die'?

You, in especial, Squires of England, whose fathers were England's bravest and best,—by how

much better and braver you are than your fathers, in this Age of Progress, I challenge you: Have any of your eyes seen the King? Are any of your hands ready for His work, and for His weapons,—even though they should chance to be pruning-hooks instead of spears?

Who am I, that should challenge *you*—do you ask? My mother was a sailor's daughter, so please you; one of my aunts was a baker's wife—the other, a tanner's; and I don't know much more about my family, except that there used to be a greengrocer of the name in a small shop near the Crystal Palace. Something of my early and vulgar life, if it interest you, I will tell in next Fors: in this one, it is indeed my business, poor gipsy herald as I am, to bring you such challenge, though you shall hunt and hang me for it.

Squires, are you, and not Workmen, nor Labourers, do you answer next?

Yet, I have certainly sometimes seen engraved over your family vaults, and especially on the more modern tablets, those comfortful words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." But I observe that you are usually content, with the help of the village stonemason, to say *only* this concerning your dead; and that you but rarely venture to add the "yea" of the Spirit, "that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them." Nay, I am not even sure that many of you clearly apprehend the meaning of such followers and following; nor, in the most pathetic funeral sermons, have I

heard the matter made strictly intelligible to your hope. For indeed, though you have always graciously considered your church no less essential a part of your establishment than your stable, you have only been solicitous that there should be no broken-winded steeds in the one, without collateral endeavour to find clerks for the other in whom the breath of the Spirit should be unbroken also.

As yet it is a text which, seeing how often we would fain take the comfort of it, surely invites explanation. The implied difference between those who die in the Lord, and die—otherwise; the essential distinction between the labour from which these blessed ones rest, and the work which in some mysterious way follows them; and the doubt—which must sometimes surely occur painfully to a sick or bereaved squire—whether the labours of his race are always severe enough to make rest sweet, or the works of his race always distinguished enough to make their following superb,—ought, it seems to me, to cause the verse to glow on your (lately, I observe, more artistic) tombstones, like the letters on Belshazzar's wall; and with the more lurid and alarming light, that this "following" of the works is distinctly connected, in the parallel passage of Timothy, with "judgment" upon the works; and that the kinds of them which can securely front such judgment, are there said to be, in some cases, "manifest beforehand," and, in no case, ultimately obscure.

"It seems to me," I say, as if such questions

should occur to the squire during sickness, or funeral pomp. But the seeming is far from the fact. For I suppose the last idea which is likely ever to enter the mind of a representative squire, in any vivid or tenable manner, would be that anything he had ever done, or said, was liable to a judgment from superior powers; or that any other law than his own will, or the fashion of his society, stronger than his will, existed in relation to the management of his estate. Whereas, according to any rational interpretation of our Church's doctrine, as by law established; if there be one person in the world rather than another to whom it makes a serious difference whether he dies in the Lord or out of Him: and if there be one rather than another who will have strict scrutiny made into his use of every instant of his time, every syllable of his speech, and every action of his hand and foot,—on peril of having hand and foot bound, and tongue scorched, in Tophet,—that responsible person is the British Squire.

Very strange, the unconsciousness of this, in his own mind, and in the minds of all belonging to him. Even the greatest painter of him—the Reynolds who has filled England with the ghosts of her noble squires and dames,—though he ends his last lecture in the Academy with "the *name* of Michael Angelo," never for an instant thought of following out the purposes of Michael Angelo, and painting a Last Judgment upon Squires, with the scene of it laid in Leicestershire. Appealing lords and ladies

on either hand;—"Behold, Lord, here is Thy land; which I have—as far as my distressed circumstances would permit—laid up in a napkin. Perhaps there may be a cottage or so less upon it than when I came into the estate,—a tree cut down here and there imprudently;—but the grouse and foxes are undiminished. Behold, there Thou hast that is Thine." And what capacities of dramatic effect in the cases of less prudent owners,—those who had said in their hearts, "My Lord delayeth His coming." Michael Angelo's St. Bartholomew, exhibiting his *ὀπωπή* skin flayed off him, awakes but a minor interest in that classic picture. How many an English squire might not we, with more pictorial advantage, see represented as adorned with the flayed skins of other people? Micah the Morasthite, throned above them on the rocks of the mountain of the Lord, while his Master now takes up His parable, "Hear, I pray you, ye heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment, who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces as for the pot?"

And how of the appeals on the other side? "Lord, Thou gavest me one land; behold, I have gained beside it ten lands more." You think that an exceptionally economical landlord might indeed be able to say so much for himself; and that the increasing of their estates has at least been held a desirable thing by all of them, however Fortune, and

the sweet thyme-scented Turf of England, might thwart their best intentions. Indeed it is well to have coveted—much more to have gained—increase of estate, in a certain manner. But neither the Morasthite nor his Master has any word of praise for you in appropriating surreptitiously, portions, say, of Hampstead Heath, or Hayes Common, or even any bit of gipsy-pot-boiling land at the road-side. Far the contrary: In that day of successful appropriation, there is one that shall take up a parable against you, and say, "We be utterly spoiled. He hath changed the portion of my people; turning away, he hath divided our fields. Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the Lord." In modern words, you shall have quite unexpected difficulties in getting your legal documents drawn up to your satisfaction; and truly, as you have divided the fields of the poor, the poor, in their time, shall divide yours.

Nevertheless, in their deepest sense, those triumphant words, "Behold, I have gained beside it ten lands more," must be on the lips of every landlord who honourably enters into his rest; whereas there will soon be considerable difficulty, as I think you are beginning to perceive, not only in gaining more, but even in keeping what you have got.

For the gipsy hunt is up also, as well as Harry our King's.; and the hue and cry loud against your land and you; your tenure of it is in dispute before a multiplying mob, deaf and blind as you,—frantic for the spoiling of you. The British Constitution

is breaking fast. It never was, in its best days, entirely what its stout owner flattered himself. Neither British Constitution, nor British law, though it blanch every acre with an acre of parchment, sealed with as many seals as the meadow had buttercups, can keep your landlordships safe, henceforward, for an hour. You will have to fight for them as your fathers did, if you mean to keep them.

That is your only sound and divine right to them; and of late you seem doubtful of appeal to it. You think political economy and peace societies will contrive some arithmetical evangel of possession. You will not find it so. If a man is not ready to fight for his land, and for his wife, no legal forms can secure them to him. They can affirm his possession; but neither grant, sanction, nor protect it. To his own love, to his own resolution, the lordship is granted; and to those only.

That is the first 'labour' of landlords, then. Fierce exercise of body and mind, in so much pugnacity as shall supersede all office of legal documents. Whatever labour you mean to put on your land, your first entirely Divine labour is to keep hold of it. And are you ready for that toil to-day? It will soon be called for. Sooner or later, within the next few years, you will find yourselves in Parliament in front of a majority resolved on the establishment of a Republic, and the division of lands. Vainly the landed millowners will shriek for the "operation of natural laws of political

economy." The vast natural law of carnivorous rapine which they have declared their Baal-God, in so many words, will be in *equitable* operation then; and not, as they fondly hoped to keep it, all on their own side. Vain, then, your arithmetical or sophistical defence. You may pathetically plead to the people's majority, that the divided lands will not give much more than the length and breadth of his grave to each mob-proprietor. They will answer, "We will have what we can get;—at all events, *you* shall keep it no longer." And what will you do? Send for the Life Guards and clear the House, and then, with all the respectable members of society as special constables, guard the streets? That answered well against the Chartist meeting on Kennington Common in 1848. Yes; but in 1880 it will not be a Chartist meeting at Kennington, but a magna-and-maxima-Chartist Ecclesia at Westminster, that you must deal with. You will find a difference, and to purpose. Are you prepared to clear the streets with the Woolwich infant,—thinking that out of the mouth of that suckling, God would perfect your praise, and ordain your strength? Be it so; but every grocer's and chandler's shop in the thoroughfares of London is a magazine of petroleum and percussion powder; and there are those who will use both, among the Republicans. And you will see your father the Devil's will done on earth, as it is in hell.

I call him your father, for you have denied your mortal fathers, and the Heavenly One. You have

declared, in act and thought, the ways and laws of your sires—obsolete, and of your God—ridiculous; above all, the habits of obedience, and the elements of justice. You were made lords over God's heritage. You thought to make it your own heritage; to be lords of your own land, not of God's land. And to this issue of ownership you are come.

And what a heritage it was, you *had* the lordship over! A land of fruitful vales and pastoral mountains; and a heaven of pleasant sunshine and kindly rain; and times of sweet prolonged summer, and cheerful transient winter; and a race of pure heart, iron sinew, splendid fame, and constant faith.

All this was yours! the earth with its fair fruits and innocent creatures;—the firmament with its eternal lights and dutiful seasons;—the men, souls and bodies, your fathers' true servants for a thousand years,—their lives, and their children's children's lives given into your hands, to save or to destroy; their food yours,—as the grazing of the sheep is the shepherd's; their thoughts yours,—priest and tutor chosen for them by you; their hearts yours,—if you would but so much as know them by sight and name, and give them the passing grace of your own glance, as you dwelt among them, their king. And all this monarchy and glory, all this power and love, all this land and its people, you pitifullest, foulest of Iscariots, sopped to choking with the best of the feast from Christ's own fingers, you have deliberately sold to the highest bidder;—Christ, and His Poor, and His Paradise together;

and instead of sinning only, like poor natural Adam, gathering of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, you, who don't want to gather it, *touch* it with a vengeance,—cut it down, and sell the timber.

Judases with the big bag—game-bag to wit!—to think how many of your dull Sunday mornings have been spent, for propriety's sake, looking chiefly at those carved angels blowing trumpets above your family vaults; and never one of you has had Christianity enough in him to think that he might as easily have his moors full of angels as of grouse. And now, if ever you did see a real angel before the Day of Judgment, your first thought would be,—to shoot it.

And for your 'family' vaults, what will be the use of them to you? Does not Mr. Darwin show you that you can't wash the slugs out of a lettuce without disrespect to your ancestors? Nay, the ancestors of the modern political economist cannot have been so pure;—they were not—he tells you himself—vegetarian slugs, but carnivorous ones—those, to wit, that you see also carved on your tombstones, going in and out at the eyes of skulls. And truly, I don't know what else the holes in the heads of modern political economists were made for.

If there are any brighter windows in yours—if any audience chambers—if any council chambers—if any crown of walls that the pin of Death has not yet pierced,—it is time for you to rise to your work, whether you live or die.

What are you to do, then? First,—the act which

will be the foundation of all bettering and strength in your own lives, as in that of your tenants,—fix their rent; under legal assurance that it shall not be raised; and under moral assurance that, if you see they treat your land well, and are likely to leave it to you, if they die, raised in value, the said rent shall be *diminished* in proportion to the improvement; that is to say, providing they pay you the fixed rent during the time of lease, you are to leave to them the entire benefit of whatever increase they can give to the value of the land. Put the bargain in a simple instance. You lease them an orchard of crab-trees for so much a year; they leave you at the end of the lease, an orchard of golden pippins. Supposing they have paid you their rent regularly, you have no right to anything more than what you lent them—crab-trees, to wit. You must pay them for the better trees which by their good industry they give you back, or, which is the same thing, previously reduce their rent in proportion to the improvement in apples. "The exact contrary," you observe, "of your present modes of proceeding." Just so, gentlemen; and it is not improbable that the exact contrary in many other cases of your present modes of proceeding will be found by you, eventually, the proper one, and more than that, the necessary one. Then the second thing you have to do is to determine the income necessary for your own noble and peaceful country life; and setting that aside out of the rents, for a constant sum, to be habitually lived well within limits of, put your

heart and strength into the right employment of the rest for the bettering of your estates, in ways which the farmers for their own advantage could not or would not; for the growth of more various plants; the cherishing, not killing, of beautiful living creatures—bird, beast, and fish; and the establishment of such schools of History, Natural History, and Art, as may enable your farmers' children, with your own, to know the meaning of the words Beauty, Courtesy, Compassion, Gladness, and Religion. Which last word, primarily, (you have not always forgotten to teach this one truth, because it chanced to suit your ends, and even the teaching of this one truth has been beneficent;)—Religion, primarily, means 'Obedience'—binding to something, or some one. To be bound, or in bonds, as apprentice; to be bound, or in bonds, by military oath; to be bound, or in bonds, as a servant to man; to be bound, or in bonds, under the yoke of God. These are all divinely instituted, eternally necessary, conditions of Religion; beautiful, inviolable captivity and submission of soul in life and death. This essential meaning of Religion it was your office mainly to teach,—each of you captain and king, leader and lawgiver, to his people;—vicegerents of your Captain, Christ. And now—you miserable jockeys and gamesters—you can't get a seat in Parliament for those all but worn-out buckskin breeches of yours, but by taking off your hats to the potboy. Pretty classical statues you will make, Coriolanuses of the nineteenth century, humbly promising, not

to your people gifts of corn, but to your potboys, stealthy sale of adulterated beer!

Obedience!—you dare not so much as utter the word, whether to potboy, or any other sort of boy, it seems, lately; and the half of you still calling themselves Lords, Marquises, Sirs, and other such ancient names, which—though omniscient Mr. Buckle says they and their heraldry are nought—some little prestige lingers about still. You yourselves, what do you yet mean by them—Lords of what?—Herrs, Signors, Dukes of what?—of whom? Do you mean merely, when you go to the root of the matter, that you sponge on the British farmer for your living, and are strong-bodied paupers compelling your dole?

To that extent, there is still, it seems, some force in you. Heaven keep it in you; for, as I have said, it will be tried, and soon; and you would even yourselves see what was coming, but that in your hearts—not from cowardice, but from shame,—you are not sure whether you will be ready to fight for your dole; and would fain persuade yourselves it will still be given you for form's sake, or pity's.

No, my lords and gentlemen,—you won it at the lance's point, and must so hold it, against the clubs of Sempach, if still you may. No otherwise. You won '*it*,' I say,—your dole,—as matters now stand. But perhaps, as matters used to stand, something else. As receivers of alms, you will find there is no fight in you. No beggar, nor herd of beggars, can fortify so very wide circumference of dish. And the

real secret of those strange breakings of the lance by the clubs of Sempach, is—"that villainous saltpetre"—you think? No, Shakesperian lord; nor even the sheaf-binding of Arnold, which so stopped the shaking of the fruitless spiculæ. The utter and inmost secret is, that you have been fighting these three hundred years for what you could *get* instead of what you could *give*. You were ravenous enough in rapine in the olden times;* but you lived fearlessly and innocently by it, because, essentially, you wanted money and food to give,—not to consume; to maintain your followers with, not to swallow yourselves. Your chivalry was founded, invariably, by knights who were content all their lives with their horse and armour and daily bread. You kings, of true power, never desired for themselves more, down to the last of them, Friedrich. What they *did* desire was strength of manhood round them, and, in their own hands, the power of largesse.

'Largesse.' The French word is obsolete; one Latin equivalent, Liberalitas, is fast receiving another, and not altogether similar significance, among English Liberals. The other Latin equivalent, Generosity, has become doubly meaningless, since modern political economy and politics neither require virtue, nor breeding. The Greek, or Greek-descended, equivalents—Charity, Grace, and the

* The reader will perhaps now begin to see the true bearing of the earlier letters in Fors. Re-read, with this letter, that on the campaign of Crecy.

like, your Grace the Duke of —— can perhaps tell me what has become of *them*. Meantime, of all the words, 'Largesse,' the entirely obsolete one, is the perfectly chivalric one; and therefore, next to the French description of Franchise, we will now read the French description of Largesse,—putting first, for comparison with it, a few more sentences* from the secretary's speech at the meeting of Social Science in Glasgow; and remembering also the *Pall Mall Gazette's* exposition of the perfection of Lord Derby's idea of agriculture, in the hands of the landowner—"Cultivating" (by machinery) "large farms *for himself*."

"Exchange is the result, put into action, of the desire to possess that which belongs to another, controlled by reason and conscientiousness. It is difficult to conceive of any human transaction that cannot be resolved, in some form or other, into the idea of an exchange. All that *is* essential in production *are*," (sic, only italics mine,) "directly evolved from this source."

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"Man has therefore been defined to be an animal that exchanges. It will be seen, however, that he not only exchanges, but from the fact of his belonging, in part, to the order carnivora, that he also inherits, to a considerable degree, the desire to possess without

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* I wish I could find room also for the short passages I omit; but one I quoted before, "As no one will deny that man possesses carnivorous teeth," etc., and the others introduce collateral statements equally absurd, but with which at present we are not concerned. (See Letter XLII.)

exchanging; or, in other words, by fraud and violence, when such can be used for his own advantage, without danger to himself."

* * * * *

"Reason would immediately suggest to one of superior strength, that, however desirable it might be to take possession, by violence, of what another had laboured to produce, he might be treated in the same way by one stronger than himself; to which he, of course, would have great objection."

* * * * *

"In order, therefore, to prevent, or put a stop to, a practice which each would object to in his own case, and which, besides, would put a stop to production altogether, both reason and a sense of justice would suggest the act of exchange, as the only proper mode of obtaining things from one another."

* * * * *

To anybody who *had* either reason or a sense of justice, it might possibly have suggested itself that, except for the novelty of the thing, *mere* exchange profits nobody, and presupposes a coincidence, or rather a harmonious dissent, of opinion not always attainable.

Mr. K. has a kettle, and Mr. P. has a pot. Mr. P. says to Mr. K., 'I would rather have your kettle than my pot;' and if, coincidently, Mr. K. is also in a discontented humour, and can say to Mr. P., 'I would rather have your pot than my kettle,' why —both Hanses are in luck, and all is well; but is their carnivorous instinct thus to be satisfied?

Carnivorous instinct says, in both cases, 'I want both pot and kettle myself, and you to have neither,' and is entirely unsatisfiable on the principle of exchange. The ineffable blockhead who wrote the paper forgot that the principle of division of labour *underlies* that of exchange, and does not arise out of it, but is the only reason for it. If Mr. P. can make two pots, and Mr. K. two kettles, and so, by exchange, both become possessed of a pot and a kettle, all is well. But the profit of the business is in the additional production, and only the convenience in the subsequent exchange. For, indeed, there are in the main two great fallacies which the rascals of the world rejoice in making its fools proclaim: the first, that by continually exchanging, and cheating each other on exchange, two exchanging persons, out of one pot, alternating with one kettle, can make their two fortunes. That is the principle of *Trade*. The second, that Judas' bag has become a juggler's, in which, if Mr. P. deposits his pot, and waits awhile, there will come out two pots, both full of broth; and if Mr. K. deposits his kettle, and awaits awhile, there will come out two kettles, both full of fish! That is the principle of *Interest*.

However, for the present, observe simply the conclusion of our social science expositor, that "the art of exchange is the only proper mode of obtaining things from one another;" and now compare with this theory that of old chivalry, namely, that gift was also a good way, both of losing and gaining.

"And after, in the dance, went
Largesse, that set all her intent
For to be honourable and free.
Of Alexander's kin was she;
Her mostë joy was, I wis,
When that she gave, and said, 'Have this.'*
Not Avarice, the foul caitiff,†
Was half, to gripe, so ententive,
As Largesse is to give, and spend.
And God always enough her send, (sent)
So that the more she gave away,
The more, I wis, she had alway.

* * * * *

Largesse had on a robe fresh
Of rich purpure, sarlinish;‡
Well formed was her face, and clear,
And open had she her colere, (collar)
For she right then had in present
Unto a lady made present

* I must warn you against the false reading of the original, in many editions. Fournier's five volume one is altogether a later text, in some cases with interesting intentional modifications, probably of the fifteenth century; but oftener with destruction of the older meaning. It gives this couplet, for instance,—

"Si n'avoit el plaisir de rien,
Que quant elle donnoit du sien."

The old reading is,

"Si n'avoit elle joie de rien,
Fors quant elle povoit dire, 'tien.'

Didot's edition, Paris, 1814, is founded on very early and valuable texts; but it is difficult to read. Chaucer has translated a text some twenty or thirty years later in style; and his English is quite trustworthy as far as it is carried. For the rest of the Romance, Fournier's text is practically good enough, and easily readable.

† Fr. 'chetive,' rhyming accurately to 'ententive.'

‡ Or sarsynysh (sarsenet), Fr. sarrasinesse.

Of a gold brooch, full well wrought;
And certes, it mis-set her nought,
For through her smocke, wrought with silk,
The flesh was seen as white as milke."

Think over that, ladies, and gentlemen who love them, for a pretty way of being décolletée. Even though the flesh should be a little sunburnt sometimes,—so that it be the Sun of Righteousness, and not Baal, who shines on it—though it darken from the milk-like flesh to the colour of the Madonna of Chartres,—in this world you shall be able to say, I am black, but comely; and, dying, shine as the brightness of the firmament—as the stars for ever and ever. *They* do not receive their glories,—however one differeth in glory from another,—either by, or on, Exchange.

LUCCA. (*Assumption of the Virgin.*)

'As the stars, *for ever*.' Perhaps we had better not say that,—modern science looking pleasantly forward to the extinction of a good many of them. But it will be well to shine like them, if but for a little while.

You probably did not understand why, in a former letter, the Squire's special duty towards the peasant was said to be "presenting a celestial appearance to him."

That is, indeed, his appointed missionary work; and still more definitely, his wife's.

The giving of loaves is indeed the lady's first duty; the first, but the least.

Next, comes the giving of brooches;—seeing that her people are dressed charmingly and neatly, as well as herself, and have pretty furniture, like herself.*

But her chief duty of all—is to be, Herself, lovely.

> "That through her smocke, wrought with silk,
> The flesh be seen as white as milke."†

Flesh, ladies mine, you observe; and not any merely illuminated resemblance of it, after the fashion of the daughter of Ethbaal. It is your duty to be lovely, not by candlelight, but sunshine; not out of a window or opera-box, but on the bare ground.

Which that you may be,—if through the smocke the flesh, then, much more, through the flesh, the spirit must be seen "as white as milke."

I have just been drawing, or trying to draw, Giotto's 'Poverty' (Sancta Paupertas) at Assisi. You may very likely know the chief symbolism of the picture: that Poverty is being married to St. Francis, and that Christ marries them, while her

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* Even after eighteen hundred years of sermons, the Christian public do not clearly understand that 'two coats,' in the brief sermon of the Baptist to repentance, mean also, two petticoats, and the like.

I am glad that Fors obliges me to finish this letter at Lucca, under the special protection of St. Martin.

† Fr., "Si que par delà la chemise
Lui blancheoit la char alise."

Look out 'Alice,' in Miss Yonge's Dictionary of Christian Names, and remember Alice of Salisbury.

bare feet are entangled in thorns, but behind her head is a thicket of rose and lily. It is less likely you should be acquainted with the farther details of the group.

The thorns are of the acacia, which, according to tradition, was used to weave Christ's crown. The roses are in two clusters,—palest red,* and deep crimson; the one on her right, the other on her left; above her head, pure white on the golden ground, rise the Annunciation Lilies. She is not crowned with them, observe; they are behind her: she is crowned only with her own hair, wreathed in a tress with which she had bound her short bridal veil. For dress, she has—her smocke only; and *that* torn, and torn again, and patched, diligently; except just at the shoulders, and a little below the throat, where Giotto has torn it, too late for her to mend; and the fair flesh is seen through, so white that one cannot tell where the rents are, except when quite close.

For girdle, she has the Franciscan's cord; but that also is white, as if spun of silk; her whole figure, like a statue of snow, seen against the shade of her purple wings: for she is already one of the angels. A crowd of them, on each side, attend her; two, her sisters, are her bridesmaids also. Giotto has written their names above them—SPES; KARITAS;—their sister's Christian name he has written

* I believe the pale roses are meant to be white, but are tinged with red that they may not contend with the symbolic brightness of the lilies.

in the lilies, for those of us who have truly learned to read. Charity is *crowned* with white roses, which burst, as they open, into flames; and she gives the bride a marriage gift.

"An apple," say the interpreters.

Not so. It was some one else than Charity who gave the first bride *that* gift. It is a heart.

Hope only points upwards; and while Charity has the golden nimbus round her head circular (infinite), like that of Christ and the eternal angels, *she* has her glory set within the lines that limit the cell of the bee,—hexagonal.

And the bride has hers, also, so restricted: nor though she and her bridesmaids are sisters, are they dressed alike; but one in red; and one in green; and one, robe, flesh and spirit, a statue of Snow,

"La terza parea neve, teste mossa."

Do you know now, any of you, ladies mine, what Giotto's lilies mean between the roses? or how they may also grow among the Sesame of knightly spears?

Not one of you, maid or mother, though I have besought you these four years, (except only one or two of my personal friends,) has joined St. George's Company. You probably think St. George may advise some different arrangements in Hanover Square? It is possible; for his own knight's cloak is white, and he may wish you to bear such celestial appearance constantly. You talk often of bearing Christ's cross; do you never think of

putting on Christ's robes,—those that He wore on Tabor? nor know what lamps they were which the wise virgins trimmed for the marriage feast? You think, perhaps, you can go in to that feast in gowns made half of silk, and half of cotton, spun in your Lancashire cotton-mills; and that the Americans have struck oil enough—(lately, I observe also, native gas,)—to supply any number of belated virgins?

It is not by any means so, fair ladies. It is only your newly adopted Father who tells you so. Suppose, learning what it is to be generous, you recover your descent from God, and then weave your household dresses white with your own fingers? For as no fuller on earth can white them, but the light of a living faith,—so no demon under the earth can darken them like the shadow of a dead one. And your modern English 'faith without works,' *is* dead; and would to God she were buried too, for the stench of her goes up to His throne from a thousand fields of blood. *Weave*, I say,—you have trusted far too much lately to the washing,—your household raiment white; go out in the morning to Ruth's field, to sow as well as to glean; sing your Te Deum, at evening, thankfully, as God's daughters,—and there shall be no night there, for your light shall so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify—not Baal the railroad accident —but

"L'Amor che muove il Sole, e l'altre stelle."

LETTER XLVI

THE SACRISTAN

FLORENCE, *28th August*, 1874.

I INTENDED this letter to have been published on my mother's birthday, the second of next month. Fors, however, has entirely declared herself against that arrangement, having given me a most unexpected piece of work here, in drawing the Emperor, King, and Baron, who, throned by Simone Memmi beneath the Duomo of Florence, beside a Pope, Cardinal, and Bishop, represented, to the Florentine mind of the fourteenth century, the sacred powers of the State in their fixed relation to those of the Church. The Pope lifts his right hand to bless, and holds the crosier in his left; having no powers but of benediction and protection. The Emperor holds his sword upright in his right hand, and a skull in his left, having alone the power of death. Both have triple crowns; but the Emperor alone has a nimbus. The King has the diadem of fleur-de-lys, and the ball and globe; the Cardinal, a book. The Baron has his warrior's sword; the Bishop, a pastoral staff. And the whole scene is very beautifully expressive of what have been by

learned authors supposed the Republican or Liberal opinions of Florence, in her day of pride.

The picture (fresco), in which this scene occurs, is the most complete piece of theological and political teaching given to us by the elder arts of Italy; and this particular portion of it is of especial interest to me, not only as exponent of the truly liberal and communist principles which I am endeavouring to enforce in these letters for the future laws of the St. George's Company; but also because my maternal grandmother was the landlady of the Old King's Head in Market Street, Croydon; and I wish she were alive again, and I could paint her Simone Memmi's King's head, for a sign.

My maternal grandfather was, as I have said, a sailor, who used to embark, like Robinson Crusoe, at Yarmouth, and come back at rare intervals, making himself very delightful at home. I have an idea he had something to do with the herring business, but am not clear on that point; my mother never being much communicative concerning it. He spoiled her, and her (younger) sister, with all his heart, when he was at home; unless there appeared any tendency to equivocation, or imaginative statements, on the part of the children, which were always unforgiveable. My mother being once perceived by him to have distinctly told him a lie, he sent the servant out forthwith to buy an entire bundle of new broom twigs to whip her with. "They did not hurt me so much as one would have done," said my mother, "but I *thought* a good deal of it."

My grandfather was killed at two-and-thirty, by trying to ride, instead of walk, into Croydon; he got his leg crushed by his horse against a wall; and died of the hurt's mortifying. My mother was then seven or eight years old, and, with her sister, was sent to quite a fashionable (for Croydon) day-school, (Mrs. Rice's,) where my mother was taught evangelical principles, and became the pattern girl and best sewer in the school; and where my aunt absolutely refused evangelical principles, and became the plague and pet of it.

My mother, being a girl of great power, with not a little pride, grew more and more exemplary in her entirely conscientious career, much laughed at, though much beloved, by her sister; who had more wit, less pride, and no conscience. At last my mother, being a consummate housewife, was sent for to Scotland to take care of my paternal grandfather's house; who was gradually ruining himself; and who at last effectually ruined, and killed, himself. My father came up to London; was a clerk in a merchant's house for nine years, without a holiday; then began business on his own account; paid his father's debts; and married his exemplary Croydon cousin.

Meantime my aunt had remained in Croydon, and married a baker. By the time I was four years old, and beginning to recollect things,—my father rapidly taking higher commercial position in London,—there was traceable -though to me, as a child, wholly incomprehensible—just the least

possible shade of shyness on the part of Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, towards Market Street, Croydon. But whenever my father was ill,—and hard work and sorrow had already set their mark on him,—we all went down to Croydon to be petted by my homely aunt; and walk on Duppas Hill, and on the heather of Addington.

(And now I go on with the piece of this letter written last month at Assisi.)

My aunt lived in the little house still standing —or which was so four months ago—the fashionablest in Market Street, having actually two windows over the shop, in the second story; but I never troubled myself about that superior part of the mansion, unless my father happened to be making drawings in Indian ink, when I would sit reverently by and watch; my chosen domains being, at all other times, the shop, the bakehouse, and the stones round the spring of crystal water at the back door (long since let down into the modern sewer); and my chief companion, my aunt's dog, Towzer, whom she had taken pity on when he was a snappish starved vagrant; and made a brave and affectionate dog of: which was the kind of thing she did for every living creature that came in her way, all her life long.

I am sitting now in the Sacristan's cell at Assisi. Its roof is supported by three massive beams,—not squared beams, but tree trunks barked, with the grand knots left in them, answering all the purpose of sculpture. The walls are of rude white plaster,

though there is a Crucifixion by Giottino on the back of one, outside the door; the floor, brick; the table, olive wood; the windows two, and only about four feet by two in the opening, (but giving plenty of light in the sunny morning, aided by the white walls,) looking out on the valley of the Tescio. Under one of them, a small arched stove for cooking; in a square niche beside the other, an iron wash-hand stand,—that is to say, a tripod of good fourteenth century work, carrying a grand brown porringer, two feet across, and half a foot deep. Between the windows is the fireplace, the wall above it rich brown with the smoke. Hung against the wall behind me are a saucepan, gridiron, and toasting fork; and in the wall a little door, closed only by a brown canvas curtain, opening to an inner cell nearly filled by the bedstead; and at the side of the room a dresser, with cupboard below, and two wine flasks, and three pots of Raphael ware on the top of it, together with the first volume of the 'Maraviglie di Dio nell' anime del Purgatorio, del padre Carlo Gregorio Rosignoli, della Compagnia de Gesu,' (Roma, 1841). There is a bird singing outside; a constant low hum of flies, making the ear sure it is summer; a dove cooing, very low; and absolutely nothing else to be heard, I find, after listening with great care. And I feel entirely at home, because the room—except in the one point of being extremely dirty—is just the kind of thing I used to see in my aunt's bakehouse; and the country and the sweet valley outside still rest in

peace, such as used to be on the Surrey hills in the olden days.

And now I am really going to begin my steady explanation of what the St. George's Company have to do.

1. You are to do good work, whether you live or die. 'What *is* good work?' you ask. Well you may! For your wise pastors and teachers, though they have been very careful to assure you that good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, have been so certain of that fact that they never have been the least solicitous to explain to you, and still less to discover for themselves, what good works *were;* content if they perceived a general impression on the minds of their congregations that good works meant going to church and admiring the sermon on Sundays, and making as much money as possible in the rest of the week.

It is true, one used to hear almsgiving and prayer sometimes recommended by old-fashioned country ministers. But "the poor are now to be raised without gifts," says my very hard-and-well-working friend Miss Octavia Hill; and prayer is entirely inconsistent with the laws of hydro (and other) statics, says the Duke of Argyll.

It may be so, for aught I care, just now. Largesse and supplication may or may not be still necessary in the world's economy. They are not, and never were, part of the world's work. For no man can give till he has been paid his

own wages; and still less can he ask his Father for the said wages till he has done his day's duty for them.

Neither almsgiving nor praying, therefore, nor psalm-singing, nor even—as poor Livingstone thought, to his own death, and our bitter loss—discovering the mountains of the Moon, have anything to do with "good work," or God's work. But it is not so very difficult to discover what that work is. You keep the Sabbath, in imitation of God's rest. Do, by all manner of means, if you like; and keep also the rest of the week in imitation of God's work.

It is true that, according to tradition, that work was done a long time ago, "before the chimneys in Zion were hot, and ere the present years were sought out, and or ever the inventions of them that now sin, were turned; and before they were sealed that have gathered faith for a treasure."* But the established processes of it continue, as his Grace of Argyll has argutely observed;—and your own work will be good, if it is in harmony with them, and duly sequent of them. Nor are even the first main facts or operations by any means inimitable, on a duly subordinate scale, for if Man be made in God's image, much more is Man's work made to be the image of God's work. So therefore look to your model, very simply stated for you in the nursery tale of Genesis.

* 2 Esdras vi. 4, 5.

Day First.—The Making, or letting in, of Light.

Day Second.—The Discipline and Firmament of Waters.

Day Third.—The Separation of earth from water, and planting the secure earth with trees.

Day Fourth.—The Establishment of time and seasons, and of the authority of the stars.

Day Fifth.—Filling the water and air with fish and birds.

Day Sixth.—Filling the land with beasts; and putting divine life into the clay of one of these, that it may have authority over the others, and over the rest of the Creation.

Here is your nursery story,—very brief, and in some sort unsatisfactory; not altogether intelligible, (I don't know anything very good that is,) nor wholly indisputable, (I don't know anything ever spoken usefully on so wide a subject that is); but substantially vital and sufficient. So the good human work may properly divide itself into the same six branches; and will be a perfectly literal and practical following out of the Divine; and will have opposed to it a correspondent Diabolic force of eternally bad work—as much worse than idleness or death, as good work is better than idleness or death.

Good work, then, will be,—

A. Letting in light where there was darkness; as especially into poor rooms and back streets; and generally guiding and administering the sunshine wherever we can, by all the means in our power.

And the correspondent Diabolic work is putting a tax on windows, and blocking out the sun's light with smoke.

B. Disciplining the falling waters. In the Divine work, this is the ordinance of clouds;* in the human it is properly putting the clouds to service; and first stopping the rain where they carry it from the sea, and then keeping it pure as it goes back to the sea again.

And the correspondent Diabolic work is the arrangement of land so as to throw all the water back to the sea as fast as we can;† and putting every sort of filth into the stream as it runs.

C. The separation of earth from water, and planting it with trees. The correspondent human work is especially clearing morasses, and planting desert ground.

The Dutch, in a small way, in their own country, have done a good deal with sand and tulips; also the North Germans. But the most beautiful type of the literal ordinance of dry land in water is the State of Venice, with her sea-canals, restrained, traversed by their bridges, and especially bridges of the Rivo Alto or High Bank, which are, or were till a few years since, symbols of the work of a

* See 'Modern Painters,' vol. iii., "The Firmament."

† Compare Dante, Purg., end of Canto V.

true Pontifex,—the Pontine Marshes being the opposite symbol.

The correspondent Diabolic work is turning good land and water into mud; and cutting down trees that we may drive steam ploughs, etc., etc.

D. The establishment of times and seasons. The correspondent human work is a due watching of the rise and set of stars, and course of the sun; and due administration and forethought of our own annual labours, preparing for them in hope, and concluding them in joyfulness, according to the laws and gifts of Heaven. Which beautiful order is set forth in symbols on all lordly human buildings round the semicircular arches which are types of the rise and fall of days and years.

And the correspondent Diabolic work is turning night into day with candles, so that we never see the stars; and mixing the seasons up one with another, and having early strawberries, and green pease and the like.

E. Filling the waters with fish, and air with birds. The correspondent human work is Mr. Frank Buckland's and the like,—of which 'like' I am thankful to have been permitted to do a small piece near Croydon, in the streams to which my mother took me when a child, to play beside. There were more than a dozen of the fattest, shiniest, spottiest, and tamest trout I ever saw in my life, in the pond at Carshalton, the last time I saw it this spring.

The correspondent Diabolic work is poisoning fish, as is done at Coniston, with copper-mining;

and catching them for ministerial and other fashionable dinners when they ought not to be caught; and treating birds—as birds are treated, Ministerially and otherwise.

F. Filling the earth with beasts, properly known and cared for by their master, Man; but chiefly breathing into the clayey and brutal nature of Man himself, the Soul, or Love, of God.

The correspondent Diabolic work is shooting and tormenting beasts; and grinding out the soul of man from his flesh, with machine labour; and then grinding down the flesh of him, when nothing else is left, into clay, with machines for that purpose—mitrailleuses, Woolwich infants, and the like.

These are the six main heads of God's and the Devil's work.

And as Wisdom, or Prudentia, is with God, and with His children in the doing,—"There I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight,"—so Folly, or Stultitia, saying, There is no God, is with the Devil and his children, in the *un*doing. "There she is with them as one brought up with them, and she is daily their delight."

And so comes the great reverse of Creation, and wrath of God, accomplished on the earth by the fiends, and by men their ministers, seen by Jeremy the Prophet: "For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. [Now note the reversed creation.] I beheld the Earth,

and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the Heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger."

And so, finally, as the joy and honour of the ancient and divine Man and Woman were in their children, so the grief and dishonour of the modern and diabolic Man and Woman are in their children; and as the Rachel of Bethlehem weeps for her children, and will not be comforted, because they are not, the Rachel of England weeps for her children, and will not be comforted—because they are.

Now, whoever you may be, and how little your power may be, and whatever sort of creature you may be,—man, woman, or child,—you can, according to what discretion of years you may have reached, do something of this Divine work, or *un*do something of this Devil's work, every day. Even if you are a slave, forced to labour at some abominable and murderous trade for bread,—as iron-forging, for instance, or gunpowder-making,—you can resolve to deliver yourself, and your children after you, from the chains of that hell, and from the dominion of its slave-masters, or to die. That is Patriotism; and true desire of Freedom, or Franchise. What Egyptian bondage, do you suppose—(painted by Mr. Poynter as if it

were a thing of the past!)—was ever so cruel as a modern English iron-forge, with its steam hammers? What Egyptian worship of garlic or crocodile ever so damnable as modern English worship of money? Israel—even by the flesh-pots—was sorry to have to cast out her children, —would fain stealthily keep her little Moses,—if Nile were propitious; and roasted her passover anxiously. But English Mr. P.,* satisfied with his fleshpot, and the broth of it, will not be over-hasty about his roast. If the Angel, perchance, should *not* pass by, it would be no such matter, thinks Mr. P.

Or, again, if you are a slave to Society, and must do what the people next door bid you,—you can resolve, with any vestige of human energy left in you, that you will indeed put a few things into God's fashion, instead of the fashion of next door. Merely fix that on your mind as a thing to be done; to have things—dress, for instance, —according to God's taste, (and I can tell you He is likely to have some, as good as any modiste you know of); or dinner, according to God's taste instead of the Russians'; or supper, or picnic, with guests of God's inviting, occasionally, mixed among the more respectable company.

By the way, I wrote a letter to one of my lady friends, who gives rather frequent dinners, the other day, which may perhaps be useful to others:

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* See Letter XLV. p. 434.

it was to this effect mainly, though I add and alter a little to make it more general :—

"You probably will be having a dinner-party to-day; now, please do this, and remember I am quite serious in what I ask you. We all of us, who have any belief in Christianity at all, wish that Christ were alive now. Suppose, then, that He is. I think it very likely that if He were in London, you would be one of the people whom He would take some notice of. Now, suppose He has sent you word that He is coming to dine with you to-day; but that you are not to make any change in your guests on His account; that He wants to meet exactly the party you have; and no other. Suppose you have just received this message, and that St. John has also left word, in passing, with the butler, that his Master will come alone; so that you won't have any trouble with the Apostles. Now this is what I want you to do. First, determine what you will have for dinner. You are not ordered, observe, to make no changes in your bill of fare. Take a piece of paper, and absolutely *write* fresh orders to your cook,—you can't realise the thing enough without writing. That done, consider how you will arrange your guests—who is to sit next Christ on the other side—who opposite, and so on; finally, consider a little what you will talk about, supposing, which is just possible, that Christ should tell you to go on talking as if He were not there, and never to mind *Him*.

You couldn't, you will tell me? Then, my dear lady, how can you in general? Don't you profess—nay, don't you much more than profess—to believe that Christ *is* always there, whether you see Him or not? Why should the seeing make such a difference?"

But you are no master or mistress of household? You are only a boy, or a girl. What can you do?

We will take the work of the third day, for its range is at once lower and wider than that of the others: Can you do *nothing* in that kind? Is there no garden near you where you can get from some generous person leave to weed the beds, or sweep up the dead leaves? (I once allowed an eager little girl of ten years old to weed my garden; and now, though it is long ago, she always speaks as if the favour had been done to *her*, and not to the garden and me.) Is there no dusty place that you can water?—if it be only the road before your door, the traveller will thank you. No roadside ditch that you can clean of its clogged rubbish, to let the water run clear? No scattered heap of brickbats that you can make an ordinary pile of? You are ashamed? Yes; that false shame is the Devil's pet weapon. He does more work with it even than with false pride. For with false pride, he only goads evil; but with false shame, paralyzes good.

But you have no ground of your own; you are a girl, and can't work on other people's? At least you have a window of your own, or one in which

you have a part interest. With very little help from the carpenter, you can arrange a safe box outside of it, that will hold earth enough to root something in. If you have any favour from Fortune at all, you can train a rose, or a honeysuckle, or a convolvulus, or a nasturtium, round your window—a quiet branch of ivy—or if for the sake of its leaves only, a tendril or two of vine. Only, be sure all your plant-pets are kept well outside of the window. Don't come to having pots in the room, unless you are sick.

I got a nice letter from a young girl, not long since, asking why I had said* in my answers to former questions that young ladies were "to have nothing to do with greenhouses, still less with hothouses." The new inquirer has been sent me by Fors, just when it was time to explain what I meant.

First, then—The primal object of your gardening, for yourself, is to keep you at work in the open air, whenever it is possible. The greenhouse will always be a refuge to you from the wind; which, on the contrary, you ought to be able to bear; and will tempt you into clippings and pottings and pettings, and mere standing dilettantism in a damp and overscented room, instead of true labour in fresh air.

Secondly.—It will not only itself involve unnecessary expense—(for the greenhouse is sure to turn into a hothouse in the end; and even if

* Letter XXXIV.

not, is always having its panes broken, or its blinds going wrong, or its stands getting rickety); but it will tempt you into buying nursery plants, and waste your time in anxiety about them.

Thirdly.—The use of your garden to the household ought to be mainly in the vegetables you can raise in it. And, for these, your proper observance of season, and of the authority of the stars, is a vital duty. Every climate gives its vegetable food to its living creatures at the right time; your business is to know that time, and be prepared for it, and to take the healthy luxury which nature appoints you, in the rare annual taste of the thing given in those its due days. The vile and gluttonous modern habit of forcing never allows people properly to taste anything.

Lastly, and chiefly.—Your garden is to enable you to obtain such knowledge of plants as you may best use, in the country in which you live, by communicating it to others; and teaching them to take pleasure in the green herb, given for meat, and the coloured flower, given for joy. And your business is not to make the greenhouse or hothouse rejoice and blossom like the rose, but the wilderness and solitary place. And it is, therefore, (look back to Letter 26th, p. 48,) not at all of camellias and air-plants that the devil is afraid; on the contrary, the Dame aux Camellias is a very especial servant of his; and the Fly-God of Ekron himself superintends—as you may gather from Mr. Darwin's recent investigations—the birth and parentage of

the orchidaceæ. But he is mortally afraid of roses and crocuses.

Of roses, that is to say, growing wild;—(what lovely hedges of them there were, in the lane leading from Dulwich College up to Windmill (or Gipsy) Hill, in my aunt's time!)—but of the massy horticultural-prize rose,—fifty pounds' weight of it on a propped bush—he stands in no awe whatever; not even when they are cut afterwards and made familiar to the poor in the form of bouquets, so that poor Peggy may hawk them from street to street—and hate the smell of them, as his own imps do. For Mephistopheles knows there are poorer Margarets yet than Peggy.

Hear *this*, you fine ladies of the houses of York and Lancaster, and you, new-gilded Miss Kilmanseggs, with your gardens of Gul,—you, also, evangelical expounders of the beauty of the Rose of Sharon;—it is a bit of a letter just come to me from a girl of good position in the manufacturing districts:—

"The other day I was coming through a nasty part of the road, carrying a big bunch of flowers, and met two dirty, ragged girls, who looked eagerly at my flowers. Then one of them said, 'Give us a flower!' I hesitated, for she looked and spoke rudely; but when she ran after me, I stopped; and pulled out a large rose, and asked the other girl which she would like. 'A red one, the same as hers,' she answered. They actually did not know its name. Poor girls! they promised to take care

of them, and went away looking rather softened and pleased, I thought; but perhaps they would pull them to pieces, and laugh at the success of their boldness. At all events, they made me very sad and thoughtful for the rest of my walk."

And, I hope, a little so, even when you got home again, young lady. Meantime, are you quite sure of your fact; and that there was no white rose in your bouquet, from which the "red one" might be distinguished, without naming? In any case, my readers have enough to think of, for this time, I believe.

LETTER XLVII

MINOS, RETAINED:—THE BRITISH JUDGE

HOTEL DU MONT BLANC, ST. MARTIN'S,
12th October, 1874.

WE have now briefly glanced at the nature of the squire's work in relation to the peasant; namely, making a celestial or worshipful appearance to him; and the methods of operation, no less than of appearance, which are generally to be defined as celestial, or worshipful.

We have next to examine by what rules the action of the squire towards the peasant is to be either restrained or assisted; and the function, therefore, of the lawyer, or definer of limits and modes,—which was above generally expressed, in its relation to the peasant, as "telling him, in black letter, that his house is his own." It will be necessary, however, evidently, that his house *should* be his own, before any lawyer can divinely assert the same to him.

Waiving, for the moment, examination of this primal necessity, let us consider a little how that divine function of asserting, in perfectly intelligible and indelible letters, the absolute claim of a man to his own house, or castle, and all that it properly

includes, is actually discharged by the powers of British law now in operation.

We will take, if you please, in the outset, a few wise men's opinions on this matter, though we shall thus be obliged somewhat to generalize the inquiry, by admitting into it some notice of criminal as well as civil law.

My readers have probably thought me forgetful of Sir Walter all this time. No; but all writing about him is impossible to me in the impure gloom of modern Italy. I have had to rest awhile here, where human life is still sacred, before I could recover the tone of heart fit to say what I want to say in this Fors.

He was the son, you remember, of a writer to the signet, and practised for some time at the bar himself. Have you ever chanced to ask yourself what was his innermost opinion of the legal profession?

Or, have you even endeavoured to generalize that expressed with so much greater violence by Dickens? The latter wrote with a definitely reforming purpose, seemingly; and, I have heard, had real effects on Chancery practice.

But are the Judges of England—at present I suppose the highest types of intellectual and moral power that Christendom possesses—content to have reform forced on them by the teazing of a caricaturist, instead of the pleading of their own consciences?

Even if so, is there no farther reform indicated

as necessary, in a lower field, by the same teazing personage? The Court of Chancery and Mr. Vholes were not his only legal sketches. Dodson and Fogg; Sampson Brass; Serjeant Buzfuz; and, most of all, the examiner, for the Crown, of Mr. Swiveller in the trial of Kit,*—are these deserving of no repentant attention? You, good reader, probably have read the trial in Pickwick, and the trial of Kit, merely to amuse yourself; and perhaps Dickens himself meant little more than to amuse you. But did it never strike you as quite other than a matter of amusement, that in both cases, the force of the law of England is represented as employed zealously to prove a crime against a person known by the accusing counsel to be innocent; and, in both cases, as obtaining a conviction?

You might perhaps think that these were only examples of the ludicrous, and sometimes tragic, accidents which must sometimes happen in the working of any complex system, however excellent. They are by no means so. Ludicrous, and tragic, mischance must indeed take place in all human affairs of importance, however honestly conducted. But here you have deliberate, artistic, energetic dishonesty; skilfullest and resolutest endeavour to prove a crime against an innocent person,—a crime of which, in the case of the boy, the reputed commission will cost him at least the prosperity and

* See the part of examination respecting communication held with the brother of the prisoner.

honour of his life,—more to him than life itself. And this you forgive, or admire, because it is not done in malice, but for money, and in pride of art. Because the assassin is paid,—makes his living in that line of business,—and delivers his thrust with a bravo's artistic finesse, you think him a respectable person; so much better in style than a passionate one who does his murder gratis, vulgarly, with a club,—Bill Sykes, for instance? It is all balanced fairly, as the system goes, you think. 'It works round, and two and two make four. He accused an innocent person to-day:—to-morrow he will defend a rascal.'

And you truly hold this a business to which your youth should be bred—gentlemen of England?

'But how is it to be ordered otherwise? Every supposed criminal ought surely to have an advocate, to say what can be said in his favour; and an accuser, to insist on the evidence against him. Both do their best, and can anything be fairer?'

Yes; something else could be much fairer; but we will find out what Sir Walter thinks, if we can, before going farther; though it will not be easy—for you don't at once get at the thoughts of a great man, upon a great matter.

The first difference, however, which, if you know your Scott well, strikes you, between him and Dickens, is that your task of investigation is chiefly pleasant, though serious; not a painful one—and still less a jesting or mocking one. The first figure that rises before you is Pleydell; the second, Scott's

own father, Saunders Fairford, with his son. And you think for an instant or two, perhaps, "The question is settled, as far as Scott is concerned, at once. What a beautiful thing is Law!"

For you forget, by the sweet emphasis of the divine art on what is good, that there ever was such a person in the world as Mr. Glossin. And you are left, by the grave cunning of the divine art, which reveals to you no secret without your own labour, to discern and unveil for yourself the meaning of the plot of Redgauntlet.

You perhaps were dissatisfied enough with the plot, when you read it for amusement. Such a childish fuss about nothing! Solway sands, forsooth, the only scenery; and your young hero of the story frightened to wet his feet; and your old hero doing nothing but ride a black horse, and make himself disagreeable; and all that about the house in Edinburgh so dull; and no love-making, to speak of, anywhere!

Well, it doesn't come in exactly with my subject, to-day;—but, by the way, I beg you to observe that there is a bit of love in Redgauntlet which is worth any quantity of modern French or English amatory novels in a heap. Alan Fairford has been bred, and willingly bred, in the strictest discipline of mind and conduct; he is an entirely strong, entirely prudent, entirely pure young Scotchman,—and a lawyer. Scott, when he wrote the book, was an old Scotchman; and had seen a good deal of the world. And he is going to tell you how Love ought first to come

to an entirely strong, entirely prudent, entirely pure youth, of his own grave profession.

How love *ought* to come, mind you. Alan Fairford is the real hero (next to Nanty Ewart) of the novel; and he is the exemplary and happy hero—Nanty being the suffering one, under hand of Fate.

Of course, you would say, if you didn't know the book, and were asked what should happen—(and with Miss Edgeworth to manage matters instead of Scott, or Shakespeare, nothing else *would* have happened,)—of course the entirely prudent young lawyer will consider what an important step in life marriage is; and will look out for a young person of good connections, whose qualities of mind and moral disposition he will examine strictly before allowing his affections to be engaged; he will then consider what income is necessary for a person in a high legal position, etc., etc., etc.

Well, this is what *does* happen, according to Scott, you know;—(or more likely, I'm afraid, know nothing about it.) The old servant of the family announces, with some dryness of manner, one day, that a 'leddy' wants to see Maister Alan Fairford, —for legal consultation. The prudent young gentleman, upon this, puts his room into the most impressive order, intending to make a first appearance reading a legal volume in an abstracted state of mind. But, on a knock coming at the street door, he can't resist going to look out at the window; and —the servant maliciously showing in the client without announcement—is discovered peeping out

of it. The client is closely veiled—little more than the tip of her nose discernible. She is, fortunately, a little embarrassed herself; for she did not want Mr. Alan Fairford at all, but Mr. Alan Fairford's father. They sit looking at each other—at least, he looking at the veil and a green silk cloak—for half a minute. The young lady—(for she *is* young; he has made out that, he admits; and something more perhaps,)—is the first to recover her presence of mind; makes him a pretty little apology for having mistaken him for his father; says that, now she has done it, he will answer her purpose, perhaps, even better; but she thinks it best to communicate the points on which she requires his assistance, in writing,—curtsies him, on his endeavour to remonstrate, gravely and inexorably into silence,—disappears, — "And put the sun in her pocket, I believe," as she turned the corner, says prudent Mr. Alan. And keeps it in her pocket for him,—evermore. That is the way one's Love is sent, when she is sent from Heaven, says the aged Scott.

'But how ridiculous,—how entirely unreasonable,—how unjustifiable, on any grounds of propriety or common sense!'

Certainly, my good sir,—certainly: Shakespeare and Scott can't help that;—all they know is,—that is the way God and Nature manage it. Of course, Rosalind ought to have been much more particular in her inquiries about Orlando;—Juliet about the person masqued as a pilgrim;—and there is really no excuse whatever for Desdemona's conduct; and

we all know what came of it;—but, again I say, Shakespeare and Scott can't help that.

Nevertheless, Love is not the subject of this novel of Redgauntlet; but Law: on which matter we will endeavour now to gather its evidence.

Two youths are brought up together—one, the son of a Cavalier, or Ghibelline, of the old school, whose Law is in the sword, and the heart; and the other of a Roundhead, or Guelph, of the modern school, whose Law is in form and precept. Scott's own prejudices lean to the Cavalier; but his domestic affections, personal experience, and sense of equity, lead him to give utmost finish to the adverse character. The son of the Cavalier—in moral courage, in nervous power, in general sense and self-command,—is entirely inferior to the son of the Puritan; nay, in many respects quite weak and effeminate; one slight and scarcely noticeable touch, (about the unproved pistol,) gives the true relation of the characters, and makes their portraiture complete, as by Velasquez.

The Cavalier's father is dead; his uncle asserts the Cavalier's law of the Sword over him: its effects upon him are the first clause of the book.

The Puritan's father—living—asserts the law of Precept over him: its effects upon him are the second clause of the book.

Together with these studies of the two laws in their influence on the relation of guardian and ward —or of father and child, their influence on society is examined in the opposition of the soldier and

hunter to the friend of man and animals,—Scott putting his whole power into the working out of this third clause of the book.

Having given his verdict in these three clauses, wholly in favour of the law of precept,—he has to mark the effects of its misapplication,—first moral, then civil.

The story of Nanty Ewart, the fourth clause, is the most instructive and pathetic piece of Scott's judgment on the abuse of the moral law, by pride, in Scotland, which you can find in all his works.

Finally, the effects of the abuse of the civil law by sale, or simony, have to be examined; which is done in the story of Peter Peebles.

The involution of this fifth clause with that of Nanty Ewart is one of the subtlest pieces of heraldic quartering which you can find in all the Waverley novels; and no others have any pretence to range with them in this point of art at all. The best, by other masters, are a mere play of kaleidoscope colour compared to the severe heraldic delineation of the Waverleys.

We will first examine the statement of the abuse of Civil Law.

There is not, if you have any true sympathy with humanity, extant for you a more exquisite study of the relations which must exist, even under circumstances of great difficulty and misunderstanding, between a good father and good son, than the scenes of Redgauntlet laid in Edinburgh. The father's intense devotion, pride, and

joy, mingled with fear, in the son; the son's direct, unflinching, unaffected obedience, hallowed by pure affection, tempered by youthful sense, guided by high personal power. And all this force of noble passion and effort, in both, is directed to a single object—the son's success at the bar. That success, as usually in the legal profession, must, if it be not wholly involved, at least give security for itself, in the impression made by the young counsel's opening speech. All the interests of the reader (if he has any interest in him) are concentrated upon this crisis in the story; and the chapter which gives account of the fluctuating event is one of the supreme masterpieces of European literature.

The interests of the reader, I say, are concentrated on the success of the young counsel: that of his client is of no importance whatever to any one. You perhaps forget even who the client is —or recollect him only as a poor drunkard, who must be kept out of the way for fear he should interrupt his own counsel, or make the jury laugh at him. His cause has been—no one knows how long—in the courts; it is good for practising on, by any young hand.

You forget Peter Peebles, perhaps: you don't forget Miss Flite, in the Dickens' court? Better done, therefore,—Miss Flite,—think you?

No; not so well done; or anything like so well done. The very primal condition in Scott's type of the ruined creature is, that he *should* be

forgotten! Worse;—that he should *deserve* to be forgotten. Miss Flite interests you—takes your affections—deserves them. Is mad, indeed, but not a destroyed creature, morally, at all. A very sweet, kind creature,—not even altogether unhappy,—enjoying her lawsuit, and her bag, and her papers. She is a picturesque, quite unnatural and unlikely figure,—therefore wholly ineffective except for story-telling purposes.*

But Peter Peebles is a natural ruin, and a total one. An accurate type of what is to be seen every day, and carried to the last stage of its misery. He is degraded alike in body and heart;—mad, but with every vile sagacity unquenched,—while every hope in earth and heaven is taken away.

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* I am very grateful to the friend who sends me the following note on my criticism of Dickens:—

"It does not in the least detract from the force of Fors, that there was a real 'Miss Flite,' whom I have seen, and my father well remembers; and who used to haunt the Courts in general, and sometimes to address them. She had been ruined, it was believed; and Dickens must have seen her, for her picture is like the original. But he knew nothing about her, and only constructed her after his fashion. She cannot have been any prototype of the character of Miss Flite. I never heard her real name. Poor thing! she did not look sweet or kind, but crazed and spiteful; and unless looks deceived Dickens, he just gave careless, false witness about her. Her condition seemed to strengthen your statement in its very gist,—as Law had made her look like Peter Peebles.

"My father remembers little Miss F., of whom nothing was known. She always carried papers and a bag, and received occasional charity from lawyers.

"Gridley's real name was Ikey;—he haunted Chancery. Another, named Pitt, in the Exchequer;—broken attorneys, both."

And in this desolation, you can only hate, not pity him.

That, says Scott, is the beautiful operation of the Civil Law of Great Britain, on a man whose affairs it has spent its best intelligence on, for an unknown number of years His affairs being very obscure, and his cause doubtful, you suppose? No. His affairs being so simple that the young *honest* counsel can explain them entirely in an hour;—and his cause absolutely and unquestionably just.

What is Dickens' entire Court of Chancery to that? With all its dusty delay,—with all its diabolical ensnaring;—its pathetic death of Richard —widowhood of Ada, etc., etc.? All mere blue fire of the stage, and dropped footlights; no real tragedy.—A villain cheats a foolish youth, who would be wiser than his elders, who dies repentant, and immediately begins a new life,—so says, at least, (not the least believing,) the pious Mr. Dickens. All that might happen among the knaves of any profession.

But with Scott, the best honour—soul—intellect in Scotland take in hand the cause of a man who comes to them justly, necessarily, for plain, instantly possible, absolutely deserved, decision of a manifest cause.

They are endless years talking of it,—to amuse, and pay, themselves.

And they drive him into the foulest death—eternal—if there be, for such souls, any Eternity.

On which Scott does not feel it his duty, as Dickens does, to offer you an opinion. He tells you, as Shakespeare, the facts he knows,—no more.

There, then, you have Sir Walter's opinion of the existing method and function of British Civil Law.

What the difference may be, and what the consequences of such difference, between this lucrative function, and the true duty of Civil Law,—namely, to fulfil and continue in all the world the first mission of the mightiest Lawgiver, and declare that on such and such conditions, written in eternal letters by the finger of God, every man's house, or piece of Holy land, is his own,—there does not, it appears, exist at present wit enough under all the weight of curled and powdered horsehair in England, either to reflect, or to define.

In the meantime, we have to note another question beyond, and greater than this,—answered by Scott in his story.

So far as human laws have dealt with the man, this their ruined client has been destroyed in his innocence. But there is yet a Divine Law, controlling the injustice of men.

And the historian—revealing to us the full relation of private and public act—shows us that the wretch's destruction was in his refusal of the laws of God, while he trusted in the laws of man.

Such is the entire plan of the story of Redgauntlet,—only in part conscious,—partly guided by the Fors which has rule over the heart of the

noble king in his word, and of the noble scribe in his scripture, as over the rivers of water. We will trace the detail of this story farther in next Fors; meantime, here is your own immediate lesson, reader, whoever you may be, from our to-day's work.

The first—not the chief, but the first—piece of good work a man has to do is to find rest for himself,—a place for the sole of his foot; his house, or piece of Holy land; and to *make* it so holy and happy, that if by any chance he receive order to leave it, there may be bitter pain in obedience; and also that to his daughter there may yet one sorrowful sentence be spoken in her day of mirth, "Forget also thy people, and thy father's house."

'But I mean to make money, and have a better and better house, every ten years.'

Yes, I know you do.

If you intend to keep that notion, I have no word more to say to you. Fare you—not well, for you cannot; but as you may.

But if you have sense, and feeling, determine what sort of a house will be fit for you;—determine to work for it—to get it—and to die in it, if the Lord will.

'What sort of house will be fit for me?—but of course the biggest and finest I can get will be fittest!'

Again, so says the Devil to you: and if you believe him, he will find you fine lodgings enough,

—for rent. But if you don't believe him, consider, I repeat, what sort of house will be fit for you.

'Fit!—but what do you mean by fit?'

I mean, one that you can entirely enjoy and manage; but which you will not be proud of, except as you make it charming in its modesty. If you are proud of it, it is *un*fit for you,—better than a man in your station of life can by simple and sustained exertion obtain; and it should be rather under such quiet level than above. Ashestiel was entirely fit for Walter Scott, and Walter Scott was entirely happy there. Abbotsford was fit also for *Sir* Walter Scott; and had he been content with it, his had been a model life. But he would fain still add field to field,—and died homeless. Perhaps Gadshill was fit for Dickens; I do not know enough of him to judge; and he knew scarcely anything of himself. But the story of the boy on Rochester Hill is lovely.

And assuredly, my aunt's house at Croydon was fit for her; and my father's at Herne Hill,—in which I correct the press of this Fors, sitting in what was once my nursery,—was exactly fit for him, and me. He left it for the larger one—Denmark Hill; and never had a quite happy day afterwards. It was not his fault; the house at Herne Hill was built on clay, and the doctors said he was not well there; also, I was his pride, and he wanted to leave *me* in a better house,—a good father's cruellest, subtlest temptation.

But *you* are a poor man, you say, and have no hope of a grand home?

Well, here is the simplest ideal of operation, then. You dig a hole, like Robinson Crusoe; you gather sticks for fire, and bake the earth you get out of your hole,—partly into bricks, partly into tiles, partly into pots. If there are any stones in the neighbourhood, you drag them together, and build a defensive dyke round your hole or cave. If there are no stones, but only timber, you drive in a palisade. And you are already exercising the arts of the Greeks, Etruscans, Normans, and Lombards, in their purest form, on the wholesome and true threshold of all their art; and on your own wholesome threshold.

You don't know, you answer, how to make a brick, a tile, or a pot; or how to build a dyke, or drive a stake that will stand. No more do I. Our education has to begin;—mine as much as yours. I have indeed, the newspapers say, a power of expression; but as they also say I cannot think at all, you see I have nothing to express; so that peculiar power, according to *them*, is of no use to me whatever.

But you don't want to make your bricks yourself; you want to have them made for you by the United Grand Junction Limited Liability Brick-without-Straw Company, paying twenty-five per cent. to its idle shareholders? Well, what will you do, yourself, then? Nothing? Or do you mean to play on the fiddle to the Company making your

bricks? What will *you* do—of this first work necessary for your life? There's nothing but digging and cooking now remains to be done. Will you dig, or cook? Dig, by all means; but your house should be ready for you first.

Your wife should cook. What else can *you* do? Preach?—and give us your precious opinions of God and His ways! Yes, and in the meanwhile *I* am to build your house, am I? and find you a barrel-organ, or a harmonium, to twangle psalm-tunes on, I suppose? Fight—will you?—and pull other people's houses down; while I am to be set to build your barracks, that you may go smoking and spitting about all day, with a cockscomb on your head, and spurs to your heels?—(I observe, by the way, the Italian soldiers have now got cocks' *tails* on their heads, instead of cocks' combs.)—Lay down the law to me in a wig,—will you? and tell me the house I have built is—NOT mine? and take my dinner from me, as a fee for *that* opinion? Build, my man,—build, or dig,—one of the two; and then eat your honestly-earned meat, thankfully, and let other people alone, if you can't help them.

LETTER XLVIII

THE ADVENT COLLECT

THE accounts of the state of St. George's Fund, given without any inconvenience in crowding type, on the last leaf of this letter of Fors, will, I hope, be as satisfactory to my subscribers as they are to me. In these days of financial operation, the subscribers to *any*thing may surely be content when they find that all their talents have been laid up in the softest of napkins; and even farther, that, though they are getting no interest themselves, that lichenous growth of vegetable gold, or mould, is duly developing itself on their capital.

The amount of subscriptions received, during the four years of my mendicancy, might have disappointed me, if, in my own mind, I had made any appointments on the subject, or had benevolence pungent enough to make me fret at the delay in the commencement of the national felicity which I propose to bestow. On the contrary, I am only too happy to continue amusing myself in my study, with stones and pictures; and find, as I grow old, that I remain resigned to the consciousness of any quantity of surrounding vice, distress, and disease, provided only the sun shine in at my window over Corpus

Garden, and there are no whistles from the luggage trains passing the Waterworks.

I understand this state of even temper to be what most people call 'rational;' and, indeed, it has been the result of very steady effort on my own part to keep myself, if it might be, out of Hanwell, or that other Hospital which makes the name of Christ's native village dreadful in the ear of London. For, having long observed that the most perilous beginning of trustworthy qualification for either of those establishments consisted in an exaggerated sense of self-importance; and being daily compelled, of late, to value my own person and opinions at a higher and higher rate, in proportion to my extending experience of the rarity of any similar creatures or ideas among mankind, it seemed to me expedient to correct this increasing conviction of my superior wisdom, by companionship with pictures I could not copy, and stones I could not understand:—while, that this wholesome seclusion may remain only self-imposed, I think it not a little fortunate for me that the few relations I have left are generally rather fond of me;—don't know clearly which is the next of kin,—and perceive that the administration of my inconsiderable effects * would be rather troublesome than profitable to them. Not in the least, therefore, wondering at the shyness of my readers to trust me with money of theirs, I have made, during these four years past, some few experiments with money

* See statement at close of accounts.

of my own,—in hopes of being able to give such account of them as might justify a more extended confidence. I am bound to state that the results, for the present, are not altogether encouraging. On my own little piece of mountain ground at Coniston, I grow a large quantity of wood-hyacinths and heather, without any expense worth mentioning; but my only industrious agricultural operations have been the getting three pounds ten worth of hay, off a field for which I pay six pounds rent; and the surrounding, with a costly wall six feet high, to keep out rabbits, a kitchen garden, which, being terraced and trim, my neighbours say is pretty; and which will probably, every third year, when the weather is not wet, supply me with a dish of strawberries.

At Carshalton, in Surrey, I have indeed had the satisfaction of cleaning out one of the springs of the Wandel, and making it pleasantly habitable by trout; but find that the fountain, instead of taking care of itself when once pure, as I expected it to do, requires continual looking after, like a child getting into a mess; and involves me besides in continual debate with the surveyors of the parish, who insist on letting all the roadwashings run into it. For the present, however, I persevere, at Carshalton, against the wilfulness of the spring and the carelessness of the parish; and hope to conquer both: but I have been obliged entirely to abandon a notion I had of exhibiting ideally clean street pavement in the centre of London,—

in the pleasant environs of Church Lane, St. Giles's. There I had every help and encouragement from the authorities; and hoped, with the staff of two men and a young rogue of a crossing-sweeper, added to the regular force of the parish, to keep a quarter of a mile square of the narrow streets without leaving so much as a bit of orange-peel on the footway, or an eggshell in the gutters. I failed, partly because I chose too difficult a district to begin with, (the contributions of transitional mud being constant, and the inhabitants passive,) but chiefly because I could no more be on the spot myself, to give spirit to the men, when I left Denmark Hill for Coniston.

I next set up a tea-shop at 29, Paddington Street, W., (an establishment which my Fors readers may as well know of,) to supply the poor in that neighbourhood with pure tea, in packets as small as they chose to buy, without making a profit on the subdivision,—larger orders being of course equally acceptable from anybody who cares to promote honest dealing. The result of this experiment has been my ascertaining that the poor only like to buy their tea where it is brilliantly lighted and eloquently ticketed; and as I resolutely refuse to compete with my neighbouring tradesmen either in gas or rhetoric, the patient subdivision of my parcels by the two old servants of my mother's, who manage the business for me, hitherto passes little recognized as an advantage by my uncalculating public. Also, steady

increase in the consumption of spirits throughout the neighbourhood faster and faster slackens the demand for tea; but I believe none of these circumstances have checked my trade so much as my own procrastination in painting my sign. Owing to that total want of imagination and invention which makes me so impartial and so accurate a writer on subjects of political economy, I could not for months determine whether the said sign should be of a Chinese character, black upon gold; or of a Japanese, blue upon white; or of pleasant English, rose-colour on green; and still less how far legible scale of letters could be compatible, on a board only a foot broad, with lengthy enough elucidation of the peculiar offices of 'Mr. Ruskin's tea-shop.' Meanwhile the business languishes, and the rent and taxes absorb the profits, and something more, after the salary of my good servants has been paid.

In all these cases, however, I can see that I am defeated only because I have too many things on hand: and that neither rabbits at Coniston, road-surveyors at Croydon, or mud in St. Giles's would get the better of me, if I could give exclusive attention to any one business: meantime, I learn the difficulties which are to be met, and shall make the fewer mistakes when I venture on any work with other people's money.

I may as well, together with these confessions, print a piece written for the end of a Fors letter at Assisi, a month or two back, but for which I had

then no room, referring to the increase of commercial, religious, and egotistic insanity, in modern society, and delicacy of the distinction implied by that long wall at Hanwell, between the persons inside it, and out.

'Does it never occur to me,' (thus the letter went on) 'that I may be mad myself?'

Well, I am so alone now in my thoughts and ways, that if I am not mad, I should soon become so, from mere solitude, but for my *work*. But it must be manual work. Whenever I succeed in a drawing, I am happy, in spite of all that surrounds me of sorrow. It is a strange feeling;—not gratified vanity: I can have any quantity of praise I like from some sorts of people; but that does me no vital good, (though dispraise does me mortal harm); whereas to succeed to my own satisfaction in a manual piece of work, is life,—to me, as to all men; and it is only the peace which comes necessarily from manual labour which in all time has kept the honest country people patient in their task of maintaining the rascals who live in towns. But we are in hard times, now, for all men's wits; for men who know the truth are like to go mad from isolation; and the fools are all going mad in 'Schwärmerei,'—only that is much the pleasanter way. Mr. Lecky, for instance;* how pleasant for him to think

* In his history of the rise and influence of rationalism in Europe, p. 284, after quoting Aristotle's saying, that all money is sterile by nature, he says, '*This is an absurdity of Aristotle's, and the number of centuries during which it was incessantly asserted without being*

he is ever so much wiser than Aristotle; and that, as a body, the men of his generation are the wisest that ever were born—giants of intellect, according to Lord Macaulay, compared to the pigmies of Bacon's time, and the minor pigmies of Christ's time, and the minutest of all, the microscopic pigmies of Solomon's time, and, finally, the vermicular and infusorial pigmies—twenty-three millions to the cube inch—of Mr. Darwin's time, whatever that may be. How pleasant for Mr. Lecky to live in these days of the Anakim,—"his spear, to equal which, the tallest pine," etc., etc., which no man Stratford-born could have lifted, much less shaken.

But for us of the old race—few of us now left,—children who reverence our fathers, and are ashamed of ourselves; comfortless enough in that shame, and yearning for one word or glance from the graves of old, yet knowing ourselves to be of the same blood, and recognizing in our hearts the same passions, with the ancient masters of humanity;—we, who feel as men, and not as carnivorous worms, we, who are every day recognizing some inaccessible height of thought and power, and are miserable in our shortcomings,—the few of us now standing here and there, alone, in the midst of this yelping, carnivorous crowd, mad for money and lust, tearing each other to pieces, and starving each other to death, and leaving heaps of their dung and ponds

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(*so far as we know*) *once questioned, is a curious illustration of the longevity of a sophism when expressed in a terse form, and sheltered by a great name. It is enough to make one ashamed of his species,*" etc.

of their spittle on every palace floor and altar stone, —it is impossible for us, except in the labour of our hands, not to go mad.

And the danger is tenfold greater for a man in my own position, concerned with the arts which develope the more subtle brain sensations; and, through them, tormented all day long. Mr. Leslie Stephen rightly says how much better it is to have a thick skin and a good digestion. Yes, assuredly; but what is the use of knowing that, if one hasn't? In one of my saddest moods, only a week or two ago, because I had failed twice over in drawing the lifted hand of Giotto's 'Poverty;' utterly beaten and comfortless, at Assisi, I got some wholesome peace and refreshment by mere sympathy with a Bewickian little pig in the roundest and conceitedest burst of pig-blossom. His servant,—a grave old woman, with much sorrow and toil in the wrinkles of *her* skin, while his was only dimpled in its divine thickness,—was leading him, with magnanimous length of rope, down a grassy path behind the convent; stopping, of course, where he chose. Stray stalks and leaves of eatable things, in various stages of ambrosial rottenness, lay here and there; the convent walls made more savoury by their fumigation, as Mr. Leslie Stephen says the Alpine pines are by his cigar. And the little joyful darling of Demeter shook his curly tail, and munched; and grunted the goodnaturedest of grunts, and snuffled the approvingest of snuffles, and was a balm and beatification to behold; and I would fain have changed places

with him for a little while, or with Mr. Leslie Stephen for a little while,—at luncheon, suppose,—anywhere but among the Alps. But it can't be.

HOTEL MEURICE, PARIS,
20th October, 1874.

I interrupt myself, for an instant or two, to take notice of two little things that happen to me here—arriving to breakfast by night train from Geneva.

Expecting to be cold, I had ordered fire, and sat down by it to read my letters as soon as I arrived, not noticing that the little parlour was getting much too hot. Presently, in comes the chambermaid, to put the bedroom in order, which one enters through the parlour. Perceiving that I am mismanaging myself, in the way of fresh air, as she passes through, "Il fait bien chaud, monsieur, ici," says she reprovingly, and with entire self-possession. Now that is French servant-character of the right old school. She knows her own position perfectly, and means to stay in it, and wear her little white radiant frill of a cap all her days. She knows my position also; and has not the least fear of my thinking her impertinent because she tells me what it is right that I should know. Presently afterwards, an evidently German-importation of waiter brings me up my breakfast, which has been longer in appearing than it would have been in old times. It looks all right at first, —the napkin, china, and solid silver sugar basin,

all of the old régime. Bread, butter,—yes, of the best still. Coffee, milk,—all right too. But, at last, here is a bit of the new régime. There are no sugar-tongs; and the sugar is of beetroot, and in methodically similar cakes, which I must break with my finger and thumb if I want a small piece, and put back what I don't want for my neighbour, to-morrow.

'Civilization,' this, you observe, according to Professor Liebig and Mr. John Stuart Mill. Not according to old French manners, however.

Now, my readers are continually complaining that I don't go on telling them my plan of life under the rule of St. George's Company.

I *have* told it them, again and again, in broad terms: agricultural life, with as much refinement as I can enforce in it. But it is impossible to describe what I mean by 'refinement,' except in details which can only be suggested by practical need; and which cannot at all be set down at once.

Here, however, to-day, is one instance. At the best hotel in what has been supposed the most luxurious city of modern Europe,—because people are now always in a hurry to catch the train, they haven't time to use the sugar-tongs, or look for a little piece among differently sized lumps, and therefore they use their fingers; have bad sugar instead of good, and waste the ground that would grow blessed cherry trees, currant bushes, or wheat, in growing a miserable root as a substitute for

the sugar-cane, which God has appointed to grow where cherries and wheat won't, and to give juice which will freeze into sweet snow as pure as hoar-frost.

Now, on the poorest farm of the St. George's Company, the servants shall have white and brown sugar of the best—or none. If we are too poor to buy sugar, we will drink our tea without; and have suet-dumpling instead of pudding. But among the earliest school lessons, and home lessons, decent behaviour at table will be primarily essential; and of such decency, one little exact point will be—the neat, patient, and scrupulous use of sugar-tongs instead of fingers. If we are too poor to have silver basins, we will have delf ones; if not silver tongs, we will have wooden ones; and the boys of the house shall be challenged to cut, and fit together, the prettiest and handiest machines of the sort they can contrive. In six months you would find more real art fancy brought out in the wooden handles and claws, than there is now in all the plate in London.

Now, there's the cuckoo-clock striking seven, just as I sit down to correct the press of this sheet, in my nursery at Herne Hill; and though I don't remember, as the murderer does in Mr. Crummles' play, having heard a cuckoo-clock strike seven—in my infancy, I do remember, in my favourite 'Frank,' much talk of the housekeeper's cuckoo-clock, and of the boy's ingenuity in mending it.

Yet to this hour of seven in the morning, ninth December of my fifty-fifth year, I haven't the least notion how any such clock says 'Cuckoo,' nor a clear one even of the making of the commonest barking toy of a child's Noah's ark. I don't know how a barrel organ produces music by being ground; nor what real function the pea has in a whistle. Physical science—all this—of a kind which would have been boundlessly interesting to me, as to all boys of mellifluous disposition, if only I had been taught it with due immediate practice, and enforcement of true manufacture, or, in pleasant Saxon, 'handiwork.' But there shall not be on St. George's estate a single thing in the house which the boys don't know how to make, nor a single dish on the table which the girls will not know how to cook.

By the way, I have been greatly surprised by receiving some letters of puzzled inquiry as to the meaning of my recipe, given last year, for Yorkshire Pie. Do not my readers yet at all understand that the whole gist of this book is to make people build their own houses, provide and cook their own dinners, and enjoy both? Something else besides, perhaps; but at least, and at first, those. St. Michael's mass, and Christ's mass, may eventually be associated in your minds with other things than goose and pudding; but Fors demands at first no more chivalry nor Christianity from you than that you build your houses bravely, and earn your dinners honestly, and enjoy them both, and be content with them both. The contentment is the

main matter; you may enjoy to any extent, but if you are discontented, your life will be poisoned. The little pig was so comforting to me because he was wholly content to be a little pig; and Mr. Leslie Stephen is in a certain degree exemplary and comforting to me, because he is wholly content to be Mr. Leslie Stephen; while I am miserable because I am always wanting to be something else than I am. I want to be Turner; I want to be Gainsborough; I want to be Samuel Prout; I want to be Doge of Venice; I want to be Pope; I want to be Lord of the Sun and Moon. The other day, when I read that story in the papers about the dog-fight,* I wanted to be able to fight a bulldog.

Truly, that was the only effect of the story upon me, though I heard everybody else screaming out how horrible it was. What's horrible in it? Of course it is in bad taste, and the sign of a declining era of national honour—as all brutal gladiatorial exhibitions are; and the stakes and rings of the tethered combat meant precisely, for England, what the stakes and rings of the Theatre of Taormina,—where I saw the holes left for them among the turf, blue with Sicilian lilies, in this last April,—meant, for Greece, and Rome. There might be something loathsome, or something ominous, in such a story, to the old Greeks of the school of Heracles; who used to fight with the Nemean lion, or with Cerberus,

* I don't know how far it turned out to be true,—a fight between a dwarf and a bulldog (both chained to stakes as in Roman days), described at length in some journals.

when it was needful only, and not for money; and whom their Argus remembered through all Trojan exile. There might be something loathsome in it, or ominous, to an Englishman of the school of Shakespeare or Scott; who would fight with men only, and loved his hound. But for you—you carnivorous cheats—what, in dog's or devil's name, is there horrible in it for *you?* Do you suppose it isn't more manly and virtuous to fight a bulldog, than to poison a child, or cheat a fellow who trusts you, or leave a girl to go wild in the streets? And don't you live, and profess to live—and even insolently proclaim that there's no other way of living than—by poisoning and cheating? And isn't every woman of fashion's dress, in Europe, now set the pattern of to her by its prostitutes?

What's horrible in it? I ask you, the third time. I hate, myself, seeing a bulldog ill-treated; for they are the gentlest and faithfullest of living creatures if you use them well. And the best dog I ever had was a bull-terrier, whose whole object in life was to please me, and nothing else; though, if he found he *could* please me by holding on with his teeth to an inch-thick stick, and being swung round in the air as fast as I could turn, that was his own idea of entirely felicitous existence. I don't like, therefore, hearing of a bulldog's being ill-treated; but I can tell you a little thing that chanced to me at Coniston the other day, more horrible, in the deep elements of it, than all the dog, bulldog, or bull fights, or baitings, of England, Spain, and California. A fine

boy, the son of an amiable English clergyman, had come on the coach-box round the Water-head to see me, and was telling me of the delightful drive he had had. "Oh," he said, in the triumph of his enthusiasm, "and just at the corner of the wood, there was *such* a big squirrel! and the coachman threw a stone at it, and nearly hit it!"

'Thoughtlessness—only thoughtlessness'—say you—proud father? Well, perhaps not much worse than that. But how *could* it be much worse? Thoughtlessness is precisely the chief public calamity of our day; and when it comes to the pitch, in a clergyman's child, of not thinking that a stone hurts what it hits of living things, and not caring for the daintiest, dextrousest, innocentest living thing in the northern forests of God's earth, except as a brown excrescence to be knocked off their branches,—nay, good pastor of Christ's lambs, believe me, your boy had better have been employed in thoughtfully and resolutely stoning St. Stephen—if any St. Stephen is to be found in these days, when men not only can't see heaven opened, but don't so much as care to see it, shut.

For they, at least, meant neither to give pain nor death without cause,—that unanimous company who stopped their ears,—they, and the consenting bystander who afterwards was sorry for his mistake.

But, on the whole, the time has now come when we must cease throwing of stones either at saints or squirrels; and, as I say, build our own houses

with them, honestly set: and similarly content ourselves in peaceable use of iron and lead, and other such things which we have been in the habit of throwing at each other dangerously, in thoughtlessness; and defending ourselves against as thoughtlessly, though in what we suppose to be an ingenious manner. Ingenious or not, will the fabric of our new ship of the Line, *Devastation*, think you, follow its fabricator in heavenly places, when he dies in the Lord? In such representations as I have chanced to see of probable Paradise, Noah is never without his ark;—holding that up for judgment as the main work of his life. Shall we hope at the Advent to see the builder of the *Devastation* invite St. Michael's judgment on his better style of naval architecture, and four-foot-six-thick 'armour of light'?

It is to-day the second Sunday in Advent, and all over England, about the time that I write these words, full congregations will be for the second time saying Amen to the opening collect of the Christian year.

I wonder how many individuals of the enlightened public understand a single word of its first clause:

> "Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life."

How many of them, may it be supposed, have any clear knowledge of what grace is, or of what

the works of darkness are which they hope to have grace to cast away; or will feel themselves, in the coming year, armed with any more luminous mail than their customary coats and gowns, hosen and hats? Or again, when they are told to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them,"—what fellowship do they recognize themselves to have guiltily formed; and whom, or what, will they feel now called upon to reprove?

In last Fors, I showed *you* how the works of darkness were unfruitful;—the precise reverse of the fruitful, or creative, works of Light;—but why in this collect, which you pray over and over again all Advent, do you ask for 'armour' instead of industry? You take your coat off to work in your own gardens; why must you put a coat of mail on, when you are to work in the Garden of God?

Well; because the earthworms in it are big—and have teeth and claws, and venomous tongues. So that the first question for you is indeed, not whether you have a mind to work in it—many a coward has that—but whether you have courage to stand in it, and armour proved enough to stand in.

Suppose you let the consenting bystander who took care of the coats taken off to do that piece of work on St. Stephen, explain to you the pieces out of St. Michael's armoury needful to the husbandman, or Georgos, of God's garden.

> "Stand therefore; having your loins girt about with Truth."

That means, that the strength of your backbone depends on your meaning to do true battle.

"And having on the breastplate of Justice."

That means, there are to be no partialities in your heart, of anger or pity;—but you must only in justice kill, and only in justice keep alive.

"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of Peace."

That means, that where your foot pauses, moves, or enters, there shall be peace; and where you can only shake the dust of it on the threshold, mourning.

"Above all, take the shield of Faith."

Of fidelity or obedience to your captain, showing his bearings, argent, a cross gules; your safety, and all the army's, being first in the obedience of faith: and all casting of spears vain against such guarded phalanx.

"And take the helmet of Salvation."

Elsewhere, the *hope* of salvation, that being the defence of your intellect against base and sad thoughts, as the shield of fidelity is the defence of your heart against burning and consuming passions.

"And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

That being your weapon of war,—your power of action, whether with sword or ploughshare; according to the saying of St. John of the young soldiers of Christ, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you." The Word by which the heavens were of old; and which, being once only Breath, became

in man Flesh, 'quickening it by the spirit' into the life which is, and is to come; and enabling it for all the works nobly done by the quick, and following the dead.

And now, finish your Advent collect, and eat your Christmas fare, and drink your Christmas wine, thankfully; and with understanding that if the supper is holy which shows your Lord's death till He come, the dinner is also holy which shows His life; and if you would think it wrong at any time to go to your own baby's cradle side, drunk, do not show your gladness by Christ's cradle in that manner; but eat your meat, and carol your carol in pure gladness and singleness of heart; and so gird up your loins with truth, that, in the year to come, you may do such work as Christ can praise, whether He call you to judgment from the quick or dead; so that among your Christmas carols there may never any more be wanting the joyfullest,—

O sing unto the Lord a new song:
Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.
Say among the heathen that the Lord is King:
The world also shall be stablished that it shall not be moved.
Let the heavens rejoice,
And let the earth be glad;
Let the sea shout, and the fulness thereof.
Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:
Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice
Before the Lord:
For He cometh, for He cometh to JUDGE THE EARTH:
HE SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS,
AND THE PEOPLE WITH HIS TRUTH.

Subscriptions to St. George's Fund

TO CLOSE OF YEAR 1874.

(*The Subscribers each know his or her number in this List.*)

		£	s.	d.
1.	Annual, £4 0 0 (1871, '72, '73, '74)	16	0	0
2.	Annual, £20 0 0 (1871, '72, '73, '74)	80	0	0
3.	Gift	5	0	0
4.	Gifts (1871), £30 0 0; (1873), £20 0 0	50	0	0
5.	Gift (1872)	20	0	0
6.	Annual, £1 1 0 (1872, '73, '74)	3	3	0
7.	Gift (1872)	10	0	0
8.	Annual, £20 0 0 (1872, '73, '74)	60	0	0
9.	Gift (1872)	25	0	0
10.	Annual, £5 0 0 (1872, '73)	10	0	0
11.	Annual, £1 1 0 (1873, '74)	2	2	0
12.	Gift (1873)	4	0	0
13.	Annual, £3 0 0 (1873, '74)	6	0	0
14.	Gift (1873)	13	10	0
15.	Gift (1873)	5	0	0
16.	Gift (1874)	25	0	0
17.	,,	1	0	0
18.	,,	10	0	0
19.	,,	5	0	0
20.	,,	2	0	0
21.	,,	10	10	0
22.	,,	1	1	0
23.	,,	5	0	0
24.	,,	1	1	0
		£370	7	0

One or two more subscriptions have come in since this list was drawn up. The subjoined letter from Mr. Cowper-Temple gives the state of the Fund in general terms.

BROADLANDS, ROMSEY,
December 9, 1874.

DEAR RUSKIN,

The St. George's Fund, of which Sir Thomas Acland and I are Trustees, consists at present of £7,000 * Consolidated Stock, and of £923 standing to the credit of our joint account at the Union Bank of London, Chancery Lane Branch. Contributions to this fund are received by the Bank and placed to the credit of our joint account.

Yours faithfully,
W. COWPER-TEMPLE.

* I have heard that some impression has got abroad that in giving this £7,000 stock to the St. George's Company, I only parted with one year's income. It was a fairly estimated tenth of my entire property, including Brantwood. The excess of the sum now at the credit of the Trustees, over the amount subscribed, consists in the accumulated interest on this stock. With the sum thus at their disposal, the Trustees are about to purchase another £1,000 of stock, and in the Fors of January will be a more complete statement of what we shall begin the year with, and of some dawning prospect of a beginning also to our operations.

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* Note.—Mr. Ruskin here confuses the New College, which is the Free Church College and Assembly Hall, and which stands at the head of the Mound overlooking the Scott Monument, with the University. Mr. Scott's house was pulled down to improve what is now Chambers Street, and to open up the view of the Northern front of the University.—Printer.

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* "Livrée à elle-même," etc. Left to herself from the age of thirteen, accustomed to reckon only upon her unaided powers, she had an experience of life that shocked me. Paris, this birthplace of hers, she knew completely, understood thoroughly. I had no idea of such a total absence of moral sense, such unconscious depravation, such impudent, innocent shamelessness. Her only rule of conduct was fancy,—instinct,—momentary caprice. She liked long sittings in cafés; melodrama relieved with pints of beer and oranges between the acts; boating parties down the river; and above all, and more than all, dancing. She was quite at home at the pleasure-gardens; she knew everybody there,—the bandmaster bowed to her, which made her extremely proud, and lots of people were on familiar terms with her. I followed her everywhere, at first; and although I wasn't exactly an innocent, nor hampered by being brought up too strictly, I was so horrified at the incredibly loose life she led, that I couldn't help making a few remonstrances. She was furious, and turned scarlet. "You do what you like," she answered; "leave me alone to suit myself." And it was no more than I owed her. She never tried to influence me; she never pressed me to follow her example. Intoxicated with her own liberty, she respected that of others.

p. 393. "C'était une vieille fille," etc. She was an old maid of fifty or so, withered and yellow, with a beak like a bird of prey; distinctly aristocratic, unquestionably pious, as devoted to gambling as the Queen of Spades herself, and a scandal-monger fit to set all the world by the ears.

"La colère," etc. Anger, at last,—one of those terrible white rages that pious women are given to,—drove the bile in floods to Mdlle. de la R.'s brain, and blanched her lips.

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* The old French verses may be rendered :—

Fair Sir, your teaching gladdens me,—
Your noble lore of loyalty,—
Nor thereagainst would I transgress;
Without it hope nor fear I see.
Love lays on me such willingness,

And bids that all my strength be set
Both morn and evening to obey
Loyalty :—and I marvel yet
How heart of man so far away
From faith to faithlessness can stray.

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